

**MAKING SPANIARDS  
NATIONAL CATHOLICISM AND THE  
NATIONALISATION OF THE MASSES DURING  
THE DICTATORSHIP OF PRIMO DE RIVERA  
(1923-1930)**

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## ABSTRACT

This thesis is a study of Spanish state and society during the 1920s. It analyses the official nationalist doctrine developed during the dictatorship of Primo de Rivera and its transmission throughout Spanish society. It sets out to explain the ideological evolution of conservative Spanish nationalism in the 1920s and the process of 'nationalisation of the masses' undertaken by the state.

The thesis is divided into two main thematic areas. The first part covers the making of the nationalist doctrine by the ideologues of the regime. Following a first chapter on Spanish nationalism prior to the dictatorship, Chapter 2 deals with the official discourse during the Military Directory (1923-1925) and Chapter 3 focuses on the *primorriverista* nationalist doctrine during the Civil Directory (1926-1930). The second part analyses the state propagation of nationalist ideas throughout society. Chapter 4 looks at the role of the army as an agency of nationalisation. Chapter 5 analyses the educational system as a nationalising agency. Finally, Chapter 6 is concerned with showing the nationalising effects of the official party and the national militia.

The conclusion is that during the 1920s the regime developed the principles of a *fascisticised* nationalism in line with the European radical Right that eventually constituted the ideological principles of Franco's dictatorship. Nevertheless, the *primorriverista* bid to carry out a process of nationalisation of the masses from above led to a 'negative nationalisation', in which increasing opposition to the state agents propagating the official canon of the nation was accompanied by the rejection of the very idea of nation defended by those agents. Thus the regime policies discredited the authoritarian canon of Spain and contributed to the popular consolidation of a republican and democratic idea of Spain.



“..the Spanish masses will consent to be shaped, for they are a noble race”

(Emilio Rodríguez Tarduchy)

“...you keenly personify the most dangerous trend for the preservation of national unity, which regionalisms and political autonomies are bound to destroy, for the masses’ ideas are simplistic and do not understand the subtleties of sharp minds”

(Primo de Rivera to Cambó)

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# INTRODUCTION

## FROM PERIPHERY TO CENTRE: STUDIES ON SPANISH NATIONALISM

Any observer of Spain's history will find the subjects of nationalism and national identity at the core of the country's political discourse throughout the entire twentieth century. From the Colonial Wars in the 1890s up to the present, the diverse nationalisms of the Iberian Peninsula have remained an essential component of the political debate in Spain. And yet, whilst studies on Catalan, Basque and Galician nationalisms have been at the centre of research projects in history, political science, and sociology departments since the 1970s, Spanish nationalism did not become a topic of systematic academic investigation until the 1990s. Only in the last five years has a considerable bulk of historiography on Spanish nationalism begun to emerge.

The reason for this 'delay' in the study of Spanish nationalism is related to the political context of Spain. During the 1940s and 1950s, Francoist historians paid very little attention to the development of Spanish nationalism. The few works written on the topic were mere propagandist efforts to 'demonstrate' the ancient unity of the fatherland based on theological and essentialist premises and to prove the 'false' postulates of Catalan and Basque nationalism.<sup>1</sup> During the same decades, Republican historians in exile addressed the question of the Spanish nation-building in a less dogmatic manner. Nevertheless, the well-known controversy between Américo Castro and Claudio Sánchez Albornoz on the constituent elements of the Spanish 'national character' remained within the realms of essentialism. By exploring the historical roots of Spain and the factors which contributed to the nation's formation and decadence (the role of Castile, the influence of Jews, Muslims and Christians, the conquest of the Americas, etc), Castro and Sánchez Albornoz partially reproduced the essentialist arguments of 1898 Generation on the nation's maladies and their possible 'cures'.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Among those Francoist propagandist works on the topic see Zacarías García Villada, *El destino de España en la Historia Universal* [Madrid:1940]; José María Fontana Tarrats, *Destino y construcción de España* [Madrid: 1945]; Pelayo Menéndez y Solá, *España y Cataluña (1892-1939)* [Barcelona: 1946]. Manuel García Morente, *La idea de la Hispanidad* [Madrid: 1947].

<sup>2</sup> A discussion of both the Francoist historiography and the Castro-Sánchez Albornoz debate in Xosé-Manoel Núñez Seixas, *Historiographical approaches to nationalism in Spain* [Saarbrücken & Fort Lauderdale: 1993], 138-139.

In the late 1960s and early 1970s new European historiographical trends slowly began to make an impact on Spanish historians. Marxist historiography, British 'new history' and the French *nouvelle histoire*, especially the *École des Annales*, led to new analyses of the Spanish nation-building process and the definitive abandonment of the essentialist thesis.<sup>3</sup> When compared to France and the UK, Marxist historians argued, 'Spain's problem' was not spiritual but the very material permanence of feudal socio-economic structures in the twentieth century owing to the failure of the Spanish bourgeoisie to carry out a complete liberal revolution in the nineteenth century.<sup>4</sup> The same years witnessed the rapid emergence of studies in Catalan, Basque and Galician nationalisms - the so-called peripheral nationalisms. This fast growth was not so much caused by changing historiographical trends and the establishment of the paradigm of the 'failed bourgeois revolution', but was rather related to the political situation in Spain; that is, studies in peripheral nationalism aimed at justifying and legitimising the Francoist opposition movement.<sup>5</sup> Against a dictatorship that proclaimed the unity of the nation as justification for its own existence, many authors emphasised regional diversity as a means of culturally undermining the Francoist regime. By the same token, the close association between Francoism and Spanish nationalism led many scholars to ignore the study of Spanish nationalism and the Spanish nation-building process.<sup>6</sup>

Francoism cast a long shadow over Spanish historiography and the situation remained the same during the 1980s. On the one hand, studies in peripheral

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<sup>3</sup> On the influence of European historiography in Spain after World War II see Carlos Dardé, *La idea de España en la historiografía del siglo XX* [Santander: 1999], 25-32.

<sup>4</sup> The key works on the subject are Manuel Tuñón de Lara, *Estudios sobre el siglo XIX español* [Madrid: 1971]; Josep Fontana, *Cambio económico y actitudes políticas en la España del siglo XIX* [Barcelona: 1973]; and Jordi Nadal, *El fracaso de la revolución industrial en España, 1814-1913* [Barcelona: 1975].

<sup>5</sup> Alfonso Botti, "Il nazionalismo spagnolo nella ricerca e nel dibattito storiografico", in *Italia Contemporanea*, June 1993, n. 191, 317-323. This is not to say that the new studies on peripheral nationalisms were not influenced by the new historiographical trends. Many key studies on Catalan nationalism took a Marxist approach. See, for example, Jordi Solé Tura, *Catalanisme i Revolució burguesa* [Barcelona: 1967]; Juan Trias Vejarano, *Almirall y los orígenes del catalanismo* [Madrid: 1975].

<sup>6</sup> Núñez Seixas, *Historiographical*, 138. One should also keep in mind the difficulties for Spanish historians to undertake critical research on such topics at Francoist universities. Nonetheless, some pioneering studies on Spanish nationalist ideology were undertaken by Antonio Elorza. See "Carácter nacional e ideologías (1914-1936)" and "El nacionalismo conservador de José María Gil Robles" in his book *La utopía anarquista bajo la Segunda República precedido de otros trabajos* [Madrid: 1973]. Other works on Spanish nationalism and the Spanish nation-building were carried out in American universities. See Juan José Linz, "Early State-Building and Late Peripheral Nationalisms Against the State: The Case of Spain", in S. N. Eisenstadt and S. Rokkan (eds.), *Building States and Nations*

nationalism and regionalism grew substantially, as regional governments massively funded the official study of their regions' past in an attempt to justify the very existence of the new Autonomous Communities.<sup>7</sup> On the other hand, research on Spanish nationalism and the Spanish nation-building continued to be overlooked. The reason for this lack of study on these topics lay in the way in which Francoist rhetoric had made abusive use of the term 'Spain' for 40 years. This had delegitimised the very idea of the Spanish nation. In turn, it led to a sort of "political-historiographical short-circuit" the effect of which was paralysis, a collective inhibition by which the terms "Spain" and "Spanish nation" were seldom used by politicians, the media or, in fact, historians.<sup>8</sup>

Not surprisingly, the few studies on Spanish nationalism carried out in the 1980s mainly concentrated on the analysis of those individuals and institutions that had played an important role in the ideological formation of Francoism. Thus Martin Blinkhorn analysed the impact of the imperial past on Spanish nationalists from the Generation of 1898 to the *Falange*. Frances Lannon dealt with the role of Catholic Church and the state in the making of the National-Catholic rhetoric before 1936; Andrés de Blas studied the nationalist discourse of key intellectual figures who were later to have an important ideological impact on the Francoist regime, such as Ortega y Gasset and Marcelino Menéndez Pelayo; while Fredes Limón Nevado and Eduardo González Calleja looked at the propagandist use of the idea of *Hispanidad* by the rebels in the Spanish Civil War.<sup>9</sup> Additionally, some other scholars focused on the nineteenth century as a way to explain the emergence of a Spanish national identity during the liberal era. The pioneering works of José María Jover, Paloma Cirujano, Teresa Elorriaga and Sisinio Pérez Garzón dealt with nineteenth century historiography and the nationalist message it contained.<sup>10</sup> Notwithstanding the

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[Beverly Hills & London: 1973], 32-116 and D. W. Foard, "The Spanish Fichte: Menéndez y Pelayo", *Journal of Contemporary History*, January 1979, vol. 14, n. 1, 83-97.

<sup>7</sup> On the production of national and regional histories of the 17 Autonomous Communities see Aurora Rivi re G mez, "Envejecimiento del presente y dramatizaci n del pasado. Una aproximaci n a las s ntesis hist ricas de las Comunidades Aut nomas espa olas (1975-1995)", in Juan Sisinio P rez Garz n et al. (eds.), *La gesti n de la memoria* [Barcelona: 2000], 161-219.

<sup>8</sup> Botti, "Il nazionalismo spagnolo", 317-323.

<sup>9</sup> Martin Blinkhorn, "The 'Spanish Problem' and the Imperial Myth", *Journal of Contemporary History*, vol. 15 (1980), 5-25; Andr s de Blas, *Sobre el nacionalismo espa ol* [Madrid: 1989]; Fredes Lim n Nevado and Eduardo Gonz lez Calleja, *La Hispanidad como instrumento de combate* [Madrid: 1988]; Frances Lannon, "Modern Spain: The project of a National Catholicism", in Stuart Mews (ed.), *Religion and National Identity. Studies in Church History* [Oxford: 1982].

<sup>10</sup> Jos  Mar a Jover, "Caracteres del nacionalismo espa ol, 1854-1874", *Zona Abierta*, April-June 1984, n. 31, 1-22; Paloma Cirujano Mar n, Teresa Elorriaga Planes and Juan Sisinio P rez Garz n,



importance of the contributions, these works were merely “oases in the desert”, to borrow Núñez Seixas’ expression.<sup>11</sup> By the end of the 1980s, research on Spanish nationalism and the Spanish nation-building process remained at the margins of the academic agenda.

But the situation changed in the early 1990s. First, the works of Andrés de Blas and José Álvarez Junco showed the central role Spanish nationalism had played in the ideology of republican, progressive and populist left-wing groups in the nineteenth and the first decades of the twentieth century.<sup>12</sup> By shifting the focus of attention to the Left, these works not only expanded the scope of studies in Spanish nationalism but also contributed to breaking the equation Spanish Nationalism = Francoism. Second, in 1990, Juan Pablo Fusi and Borja de Riquer debated on the place studies of peripheral nationalisms and regionalisms should have in Spanish historiography.<sup>13</sup> Fusi considered the academic attention paid to peripheral nationalism and regionalism since the mid-1970s had been excessive and this hampered the possibility of gaining an integral understanding of Spanish history. De Riquer, on the contrary, saw the emergence of a vast historiography on peripheral nationalisms as a “logical” and “justified” reaction to decades of centralist official historiography.<sup>14</sup> The disagreements went further. In a nutshell, even though both historians considered the impact of Spanish nationalism as a cohesive force of social integration throughout the nineteenth century to be ‘weak’, they held opposing views on the level of national consolidation achieved by the year 1900. De Riquer saw the process of nation-building throughout the nineteenth century as a failure due to, first, the centralist liberal elites’ lack of ability to integrate pre-existing regional identities and, second, the shortcomings of the bourgeois revolution, which had precluded the formation of strong state agencies (public administration, educational system, etc)

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*Historiografía y nacionalismo español, 1834-1868* [Madrid: 1985]; Juan Sisinio Pérez Garzón, “El nacionalismo historiográfico: herencia del siglo XIX y dado precedente de la obra de R. Altamira”, in Armando Arberola (ed.), *Estudios sobre Rafael Altamira* [Alicante: 1987], 353-367. See also Pierre Vilar, “Estado, nación, patria en España y en Francia, 1870-1914”, *Estudios de Historia Social*, n. 28-29, (1984), 7-41.

<sup>11</sup> Xosé-Manoel Núñez Seixas, “Los oasis en el desierto. Perspectivas historiográficas sobre el nacionalismo español”, *Bulletin d'Histoire Contemporaine de l'Espagne*, n. 26 (1997), 483-533.

<sup>12</sup> José Álvarez Junco, *El Emperador del Paralelo. Lerroux y la demagogia populista* [Madrid: 1990]; Andrés de Blas Guerrero, *Tradición republicana y nacionalismo español (1796-1930)* [Madrid: 1991].

<sup>13</sup> Borja de Riquer, “Sobre el lugar de los nacionalismos-regionanismos en la historia contemporánea española”, *Historia Social*, n. 7, (1990), 105-126; Juan Pablo Fusi, “Revisionismo crítico e historia nacionalista (A propósito de un artículo de Borja de Riquer)”, *Historia Social*, n. 7, (1990), 127-134.

<sup>14</sup> De Riquer, “Sobre el lugar”, 106-117.

capable of nationalising large sectors of the population.<sup>15</sup> Fusi, on the other hand, argued Spain was a cohesive national entity by the turn of the century. The Spanish nationalist reaction after 1898, he maintained, showed that the process of national assimilation and integration was completed by the end of the nineteenth century.<sup>16</sup>

In many ways, the Fusi-De Riquer debate was a turning point in the study of Spanish nationalism and Spanish nation-building. It fostered the idea that the study of peripheral nationalism had to be undertaken in conjunction with an analysis of the establishment and development of the Spanish liberal state, and placed the topic of Spanish nationalism at the centre of the academic discussion. The Fusi-De Riquer debate also spurred the discussion on the role of the state in the process of nationalisation. During the 1990s, the paradigm of the “weak nationalisation of the masses” became dominant, as most historians presented the liberal state as unable to create effective agencies to integrate socially vast sectors of the population under the Spanish national ideal.<sup>17</sup> The success of this line of interpretation should not come as a surprise, for it perfectly matched the 1970s paradigm of the failed bourgeois revolution and the widespread view that liberal ideas and institutions never took firm root in nineteenth-century Spain. However, by the late 1990s, as the paradigm of the failed bourgeois revolution began to be seriously challenged, so was the idea of the weak nationalisation of the masses. New studies argued that the liberal revolutions of the nineteenth century deeply transformed the country and created a state that was not substantially different to that of other European neighbours.<sup>18</sup> Moreover, these

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<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, 119-126.

<sup>16</sup> Fusi, “Revisionismo crítico”, 132.

<sup>17</sup> The thesis of the weak nationalisation of the masses was first sketched by Linz in “Early State-Building”, 32-116. De Riquer further developed the thesis in his article “La débil nacionalización española del siglo XIX”, *Historia Social*, n. 20 (1994), 97-114, and has maintained the same line up till today. His more recent contributions to the thesis of the weak nationalisation in *Identitats Contemporànies: Catalunya i Espanya* [Vic: 2000]. See also Juan Pablo Fusi, “Centre and Periphery 1900-1936: National Integration and Regional Nationalism Reconsidered”, in Frances Lannon and Paul Preston (eds.) *Élites and Power in Twentieth-Century Spain* [Oxford: 1990], 33-44. The thesis of the weak nationalisation have also been supported, among others, by Justo Beramendi in “Identidad nacional e identidad regional en España entre la guerra del francés y la guerra civil” in *Los Ibéricos y el mar*, vol. 3, [Madrid-Salamanca: 1998], 187-215; and José Álvarez Junco, “The Nation-Building Process in Nineteenth-Century Spain”, in Clare Mar-Molinero and Angel Smith, *Nationalism and the Nation in the Iberian peninsula* [Oxford: 1996]; idem, “The formation of the Spanish Identity and Its Adaptation to the Age of Nations”, *History and Memory. Special Issue. Spanish Memories: Images of a Contested Past*, Raanan Rein (ed.), vol 14, Fall 2002, 13-36; idem, “El nacionalismo español: las insuficiencias en la acción estatal”, *Historia Social* n. 40, (2001), 29-51.

<sup>18</sup> See David Ringrose, *Spain, Europe and the ‘Spanish miracle’: 1700-1900* [Cambridge: 1996]; Juan Pablo Fusi and Jordi Palafox, *España 1808-1996* [Madrid: 1997]; Isabel Burdiel, “Myths of Failure, Myths of Success: New Perspectives in Nineteenth-Century Spanish Liberalism”, *Journal of Modern History*, n. 70, (1998), 892-912.

investigations showed the process of nationalisation as partially successful and the acquisition of a Spanish national identity compatible with the creation of regional identities. According to this 'revisionist' view, Spain would not be an exception among other European countries in terms of nation-building but a 'normal' country with its peculiarities, achievements and shortcomings as any other.<sup>19</sup>

For all the debate on the process of mass nationalisation, it is important to note that the vast majority of these works approach the issue from a theoretical point of view. Scholars taking part in the debate have constantly pointed out the lack of empirical studies of the process of nationalisation in general and the state agencies in particular.<sup>20</sup> In fact, with the exception of a few very recent works dealing with state

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<sup>19</sup> Andrés de Blas was one of the first critics of the 'weak nationalisation' thesis. He argued the emergence of Catalan and Basque nationalism at the turn of the century was not due to a failure of the Spanish nationalist project but rather it was evidence of the impact Spanish nationalism had made on Catalonia and the Basque Country. See "Los nacionalismos españoles ante el Estado autonómico", in Justo Beramendi, Ramón Máiz, Xosé Núñez (eds.), *Nationalism in Europe. Past and Present* [Santiago de Compostela: 1994], 39-52. In recent years the most vehement criticism of the 'weak nationalisation' thesis has come from the members of the Contemporary History Department at the Universitat de València. See the collective article by Ismael Saz, Ana María Aguado, Joan del Alcazar, Isabel Burdiel, Manuel Martí, María Cruz Romero and Nuria Tabanera, "Normalidad y anormalidad en la historia de la España contemporánea" criticising De Riquer's views and the latter's response in "Un debate sobre el estado de la nacionalización", *Spagna contemporanea* (1998), n. 14, 139-148. Moreover the 'Valencian school' also questioned the general assumption that the permanence of strong regional identities by the turn of the nineteenth century was a sign of the weak nationalisation of the masses. Rather, they presented regional as compatible with the idea of a unified nation. See Manuel Martí and Ferrán Archilés, "La construcción de la Nación española durante el siglo XIX: logros y límites del caso valenciano" in Anna Garcia Rovira (ed.), *España, ¿Nación de naciones?*, *Ayer*, n. 35, (1999), 173-190; Archilés, Ferrán and Martí Manuel, "Un país extraño como cualquier otro: la construcción de la identidad española contemporánea", in María Cruz Romero and Ismael Saz (eds.), *El siglo XX. Historiografía e historia*, [Valencia: 2002] 245-278; idem, "Ethnicity, region and nation: Valencian identity and the Spanish Nation-State", *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 24-25 (2002), 245-278; Ferrán Archilés, "¿Quién necesita la nación débil? La débil nacionalización española y los historiadores", in Carlos Forcadell (ed.), *Uso públicos de la historia* [Zaragoza: 2002]; Josep Ramón Segarra i Estarells, "Imaginar la región y naturalizar la nación. La obra de Vicente Boix", in *Ciudadanía y Nación en el mundo hispano contemporáneo* [Vitoria: 2001], 139-162. On the compatibility between the formation of national and regional identities see also Xosé-Manoel Núñez Seixas, "The Region as Essence of the Fatherland: Regionalist Variants of Spanish Nationalism (1840-1936)", *European History Quarterly*, 2001, vol. 31 (4), 483-518. The same author also questioned the thesis of the weak nationalisation in "Proyectos alternativos de nacionalización de masas en Europa occidental (1870-1939), y la relativa influencia de lo contingente", in E. Acton and I. Saz (eds.), *La transición a la política de masas* [Valencia: 2001], 93-115.

<sup>20</sup> On the lack of empirical research on the nationalisation of the masses it is telling to compare two works by Justo Beramendi. In 1992, he complained about the lack of an "adequate historiography on Spanish nationalism and the nationalising endeavours of the Spanish state". By 2001, Beramendi acknowledged some progress had been done in the field of Spanish nationalism in the last decade but insisted that the lack of studies in the process of nationalisation remained the "major shortcoming in the field". See Justo Beramendi, "La historiografía de los nacionalismos en España", *Historia Contemporánea*, n. 7 (1992), 152; and José Luis de la Granja, Justo Beramendi and Pere Anguera, *La España de los nacionalismos y las autonomías* [Madrid: 2001], 273. Núñez Seixas has also pointed out the lack of empirical studies in the process of the nationalisation of the masses in "Los oasis", 511-513; and "Proyectos alternativos de nacionalización.", 94. De Riquer has also noted the sharp contrast between the lack of empirical studies and the abundant number of theoretical generalisations. See "El

educational agencies during the Restoration and the II Republic, the state nationalisation of the masses in Spain remains a broadly unexplored field.<sup>21</sup> This is even more obvious when comparing research undertaken on the process of nation-building in other European countries.<sup>22</sup> Despite important advances in our knowledge of the political, cultural and ideological aspects of Spanish nationalism in the last five years, an integral research analysing the role of the state in the process of the nationalisation of the masses remains to be undertaken.

This thesis addresses this lack by exploring the official nationalist doctrine elaborated during the dictatorship of Primo de Rivera and its transmission throughout Spanish society. The study concentrates on the political aspects of nationalism and focuses on the crucial role played by the state in shaping an authoritarian national identity, including procedures for developing a political discourse, implementing nationalist policies and transferring national ideals into society. It analyses the main

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surgimiento de las nuevas identidades contemporáneas: propuesta para una discusión”, in Anna Garcia Rovira (ed.), *España, ¿Nación de naciones?*, 21-22.

<sup>21</sup> A general overview on the state's efforts during the Restoration in María del Mar del Pozo and Jacques Braster, “The rebirth of the ‘Spanish Race’: The State Nationalism and Education in Spain, 1875-1931”, *European History Quarterly*, Vol. 29 (1), 1999, 75-107. A more detailed study of the educational system and diverse Spanish nationalisms up to the Civil War in María del Mar del Pozo Andrés, *Curriculum e identidad nacional* [Madrid: 2000]. The transmission of nationalist ideas through the educational system is also explored in Carolyn P. Boyd *Historia Patria* [Princeton, New Jersey: 1997]. On the nationalising efforts of the Socialist-Republican government during the Second Republic see Sandie Holguín, *Creating Spaniards. Culture and National Identity in Republican Spain* [Wisconsin: 2002]. On the army as an agency of nationalisation see Alejandro Quiroga, “‘Los apóstoles de la patria’. El Ejército como instrumento de nacionalización de masas durante la Dictadura de Primo de Rivera”, *Mélanges de la Casa de Velázquez*, 34 (1), 2004, 243-272. A revealing study on the process of assimilation of the Spanish national identity in the Valencian region in Manuel Martí and Ferrán Archilés, “La construcción”. For the Catalan case see Josep M. Fradera, *Cultura nacional en una societat dividida. Patriotisme i cultura a Catalunya (1838-1868)* [Barcelona: 1992]. On the state administrative apparatus B. Richard, “Notas sobre el reclutamiento del alto personal de la Restauración (1874-1923): el origen geográfico de los gobernadores civiles y su evolución”, in M. Tuñón de Lara (ed.), *Sociedad Política y cultura en la España de los siglos XIX-XX* [Madrid: 1973], 56-85; B. de Riquer and M. Risques, “Participació administrativa, professional i política en l'Estat”, in M. T. Pérez Picazo et al. (eds.), *Els catalans a Espanya, 1760-1914* [Barcelona: 1996], 83-93.

<sup>22</sup> For the state nationalisation of the masses in France see the classic work by Eugene Weber, *Peasant into Frenchmen. Modernization of Rural France, 1870-1914* [Stanford, California: 1976]. See also Maurice Agulhon, *La République au village* [Paris: 1970]. The British case has been analysed focussing on the empire and the role of the Anglican church as integrating factors rather than the state. See Linda Colley, *Britons: Forging the Nation, 1707-1837* [New Haven: 1992] and L. Brockliss and D. Eastwood (eds.), *A Union of Multiple Identities. The British Isles, c. 1750-c. 1850* [Manchester: 1997]. For the German case of state-building and nationalisation see Hans Ulrich Wehler, *German Empire, 1870-1914* [Leamington Spa: 1985]. George L. Mosse's *The Nationalization of the Masses*. [New York: 1975] focuses more on mass movements than in the actual role of the state, but remains a key work for the understanding of mass nationalisation in Germany and elsewhere. The Italian nationalisation of the masses is studied in G. Turi and S. Soldani (eds.), *Fare gli italiani* [Bologna: 1994]; and Emilio Gentile, *Il mito dello Stato Nuovo* [Roma-Bari: 1999]. A recent analysis of Stalin's policies of nationalisation in David Branderberger, *National Bolshevism: Stalinist Mass Culture and the Formation of Modern Russian National Identity, 1931-1956* [Cambridge (Mass): 2002].

agencies that the regime used in the process of mass nationalisation, namely the army, the educational system, the official party and the militia. The study of these agencies allows us to assess the process of political indoctrination and nationalisation of society implemented by the regime.

By 'nationalisation' I mean the historical process of homogenising the population under a common nationality. This process was closely related to the formation of the European liberal nation-states throughout the nineteenth century. As a way of legitimisation, the emerging nation-states required Ancien Regime identities to be supplanted by new collective identities based on the idea of belonging to a political nation identified with the state. In other words, liberal elites faced the task of transforming 'subjects' loyal to their local lord and king into 'citizens' loyal to the nation-state. The development of a national consciousness – one in which national identifications were strong enough to override or integrate regional and religious loyalties - was a long process and required a systematic political education of the population. The formation of a strong sense of common belonging was facilitated by the creation of state agencies (the 'national' educational system, the army, the central administration, etc), the emergence of a 'national public' (the press, a reading public, a cultural domain of theatre and public spectacle), and the development of a more comprehensive system of inter-state communication and transportation.<sup>23</sup>

While initially large sectors of the population remained outside of this process of nationalisation, the last quarter of the nineteenth century and the first decades of the twentieth century witnessed the nationalisation of the masses all around Europe coinciding with the coming of mass politics. This second wave of nationalisations took place in a time when classical liberal principles were being questioned by many intellectuals and anti-liberal nationalisms were on the rise. The authoritarian regimes of the inter-war era epitomise the most radical attempts to nationalise the masses in anti-democratic principles.<sup>24</sup> Wary of the advance of the Left, right-wing dictatorships redefined the concept of nation, stripped from it its liberal connotations and sought to re-nationalise the population in authoritarian values.

The dissertation argues that during the 1920s Primo de Rivera's regime attempted to implement an authoritarian nationalist political project to construct a

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<sup>23</sup> Geoff Eley and Ronald G. Suny, "Introduction: From the Moment of Social History to the Work of Cultural Representation", in G. Eley and R. Suny (eds.), *Becoming National* [Oxford: 1996], 8-9.

<sup>24</sup> Ismael Saz Campos, *España contra España. Los nacionalismos franquistas* [Madrid: 2003], 42-45.

modern corporative nation-state which could appeal to the majority of Spaniards. In order to achieve its goal, the dictatorship carried out a process of nationalisation of the masses from above seeking to replace the hegemonic liberal Spanish national identity with a new authoritarian one.<sup>25</sup> At the ideological level, the thesis argues, the organic intellectuals of the *primorriverista* regime outlined the principles of an extreme-right nationalism that eventually became the doctrinal bases of Franco's dictatorship. In my view, the *primorriverista* construction of a new authoritarian state and the process of nationalisation of the masses can only be understood by considering the ideological implications of the new National-Catholic doctrine framed by Primo's official ideologues. The new political discourse equated Catholicism with Spanishness and started a process of 'sacralization' of politics in which the myth of the nation became the supreme political value. This new organic canon of Spain had its political implications, both in terms of the actions taken against those considered to be 'internal enemies' of the nation (e. g. republicans, anarchists, peripheral nationalists) and the reform of state agencies in order to improve their capacity as propagandist devices. Thus nationalist policies and the nationalisation of the masses implemented by the dictatorship are examined here in direct relation to the official doctrine.

By taking this top-down approach to the process of nationalisation, this study focuses on the state as the 'maker' of the nation. Thus I do not analyse some other autonomous factors, independent of the state, which also intervene in the process of nationalisation. The popular culture generated in civil society (literature, theatre, bullfighting, *zarzuela*, flamenco, etc) will not be addressed here. This study does not constitute a cultural history of the period in question. Nor will a great deal be said about the role of ideologies promoted by political groups and cultural associations other than the *primorriveristas*, even though the former played a part in the process of generating 'alternative nationalisations' to the official one.

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<sup>25</sup> For the liberal identity as the hegemonic one by 1923 see Inman Fox, *La invención de España* [Madrid: 1997], 22-23, 193. This is not to say that the liberal canon was not seriously contested by different traditionalist groups (Carlists and Catholic Integrists), Catalan and Basque nationalists and some sectors of the working class. For the different concepts of Spain in the nineteenth and the early twentieth centuries see Chapter 1.

## THE DICTATORSHIP OF PRIMO DE RIVERA AS A NATIONALIST REGIME

During the 1970s, the first studies on the dictatorship of Primo de Rivera presented the regime as a mere “parenthesis” between the Restoration and the Second Republic, in which no significant political or social changes were carried out. García Nieto, Donézar and López Puerta described the period as “a parenthesis in which the country lived moments of order and peace.” By the end of Primo’s regime in January 1930, the argument followed, “the Spanish sociopolitical situation remained unaltered.”<sup>26</sup> Along the same lines, Javier Tusell and Genoveva García considered the dictatorship as a “parenthesis” in which no important transformation of the Restoration state was undertaken.<sup>27</sup> In their view, the dictatorship was merely an attempt to ‘regenerate’ a corrupt political system and it was only after Primo’s fall, “during General Berenguer’s government, when the real transformations of the political life were going to happen.”<sup>28</sup>

Marxist historians also drew a line connecting the Restoration and the dictatorship of Primo de Rivera but they provided a more elaborated explanation for the regime. The Marxist approach interpreted the Spanish oligarchy’s initial support to the dictatorship as the final solution the Restoration upper-classes found to confront the challenge of democratisation and social reform posed by liberals, socialists, anarchists and republicans in the years before the coup. Raúl Morodo and Pierre Malerbe defined the dictatorship as a “Bonapartist regime”.<sup>29</sup> The dictatorship, the argument went, was the outcome of previous tensions between the dominant classes, which, afraid of the fall of the *canovista* regime, had given “conditional support” to Primo in order to preclude the transformation of the Restoration political system.

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<sup>26</sup> M.C. García Nieto, J. Donézar and L. López Puerta, *Bases documentales de la España contemporánea, VII: La Dictadura, 1923-1930*, [Madrid: 1973], 17.

<sup>27</sup> Javier Tusell and Genoveva García Queipo de Llano, “La dictadura de Primo de Rivera como régimen político. Un intento de interpretación”, *Cuadernos del ICE*, Madrid, 10, 1979, 37-63. Particularly pages 53-57.

<sup>28</sup> For the dictatorship as a regenerationist liberal regime see *Ibid.*, 44-48. For the quotation see Javier Tusell, *La crisis del caciquismo andaluz (1923-1931)* [Madrid: 1979], 11-17. Recently Tusell has insisted on the same view, see Carlos Seco Serrano and Javier Tusell, “La España de Alfonso XIII. El Estado y la Política”, in *Historia de España de Ramón Menéndez Pidal*, vol. XXXVIII, [Madrid: 1995], 11-51.

<sup>29</sup> Raúl Morodo, “El 18 Brumario español. La Dictadura de Primo de Rivera”, *Triunfo*, 15-9-1973, 22-27; Pierre Malerbe, “La Dictadura de Primo de Rivera”, *Historia* 16, June 1977, 75-87.

Equally from a Marxist perspective, Manuel Tuñón de Lara described the period 1917-1923 as a “crisis of hegemony”, in which the privileged position of the “social dominant bloc” was constantly at risk.<sup>30</sup> The dominant bloc’s reaction to the threat posed by democratic forces, such as the working class movement and the republicans, was then to expand the power of the state (especially its repressive apparatus) via dictatorship.<sup>31</sup>

The idea of continuity between the Restoration and the *primorriverista* regime was severely challenged in the 1980s. Shlomo Ben-Ami shared the Marxist view of the oligarchic backing of the coup and showed how the socio-economic elites, chiefly the Catalan bourgeoisie, the Basque industrialists and the Castilian landowners, supported a coup against the very same political system from which they had profited.<sup>32</sup> However, his analysis portrayed the dictatorship as the first attempt in modern Spanish history to carry out a revolution from above, in which anti-democratic traditionalism was elevated to “the status of an official guide-line” and “both politics and economy complemented each other as two faces of a dictatorial nationalist enterprise.”<sup>33</sup> Thus Primo’s dictatorship was not a “parenthesis” but rather the immediate precedent of Francoism, a bid to establish, *manu militari*, an anti-liberal New State, based on a Catholic extreme-right ideology attuned to the mainstream counterrevolutionary European thought.<sup>34</sup> Another challenge to the idea of the regime as a parenthesis is to be found in James Rial’s *Revolution from above*.<sup>35</sup> His work concentrates on Primo’s economic, social and, to a lesser extent, political

<sup>30</sup> Manuel Tuñón de Lara, “En torno a la Dictadura de Primo de Rivera”, *Cuadernos Económicos del ICE*, n. 10, (1979), 9-36. See also Colectivo de Historia, “La Dictadura de Primo de Rivera y el bloque de poder en España”, *Información Comercial Española*, n. 6, (1978), 179-216.

<sup>31</sup> The thesis of Tuñón de Lara and the Colectivo de Historia was later followed by Jordi Casassas Ymbert in his “Introducción” to *La Dictadura de Primo de Rivera (1923-1930). Textos* [Barcelona: Anthropos, 1983], 9-39. For a more recent work close to this thesis see Carlos Ernesto Hernández Hernández, “¿Regeneración o reconstrucción? Reflexiones sobre el Estado bajo la Dictadura primorriverista (1923-1930)”, *Historia Contemporánea*, 17, (1998), 335-357.

<sup>32</sup> Shlomo Ben-Ami, *Fascism from above. The Dictatorship of Primo de Rivera in Spain, 1923-1930*, [Oxford: 1983], 19-52.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, ix-x.

<sup>34</sup> Ben-Ami had advanced these views in previous works. See “The Dictatorship of Primo de Rivera: A Political Reassessment”, *Journal of Contemporary History*, 12 (1977), 65-84; *Los orígenes de la II República* [Madrid: 1990, English ed. 1978]; “Hacia una comprensión de la Dictadura de Primo de Rivera”, *Revista del Departamento de Derecho Político*, n. 6, (1980), 107-132; and “La Dictadura de Primo de Rivera y el final de la monarquía parlamentaria”, in *Historia general de España y América*, Volume XVI-2 [Madrid: 1981], 523-580.

<sup>35</sup> James Rial *Revolution from above. The Primo de Rivera Dictatorship in Spain, 1923-1930* [Crambury (N.J.): 1986].



reforms and shows the dictator's efforts to carry out a "revolution from above", breaking with the liberal traditions.

The idea of rupture with the Restoration political system was also emphasised by María Teresa González Cabet. Like Ben-Ami, González Calbet pointed out the deep changes operated during the dictatorship, namely the political and ideological destruction of the "dynastic parties", the ideological formulation of a political alternative to the old system by members of diverse extreme-right groups and the creation of a state-controlled political party during the Military Directory.<sup>36</sup> Similarly, José Luis Gómez Navarro's works highlighted the profound transformation of the political system during the dictatorship and the new political personnel and social bases which supported the *primorriverista* regime.<sup>37</sup> Moreover, Gómez Navarro concluded that *primorriverismo* formulated a political and ideological alternative to the Restoration system by the last years of the Civil Directory; an alternative eventually adopted by Franco's regime during its first era.<sup>38</sup>

Ben-Ami, González Calbet and Gómez-Navarro's works revolutionised the historiography of the dictatorship and debunked all assumptions which presented the regime as a mere "parenthesis". The novelty of these investigations was threefold. First, they demonstrated the dictator's endeavours to create a new authoritarian state, which signalled a definitive attempt to end the constitutional system of the Restoration.<sup>39</sup> Second, they portrayed a much more complex picture of the

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<sup>36</sup> María Teresa González Calbet, *La Dictadura de Primo de Rivera. El Directorio Militar*, [Madrid: 1987], 12-13. By the same author see also "La destrucción del sistema político de la Restauración: el golpe de septiembre de 1923", in José Luis García Delgado (ed.), *La crisis de la Restauración* [Madrid: 1986], 101-120. Unlike Ben-Ami, however, González Calbet argued that the dictatorship came not as a reaction from the Crown and the military against the democratic tendencies of Sánchez Guerra's government, but rather as the only available solution to cope with the crisis of the Restoration's political system from above. In other words, the military dictatorship was nothing but a coup de grace of the "terminally sick dynastic parties". See *La Dictadura*, 279. Ben-Ami's views were based on Raymond Carr and Carolyn Boyd's ideas. They argued that the Sánchez Guerra's government sought a democratisation of the Restoration. Thus the coup would have been an attempt by the military to stop this process of democratisation. See Ben-Ami, *Fascism*, 19-33; Raymond Carr, *España, 1808-1939*, [Barcelona, 1969], 504-505; Carolyn Boyd, *Praetorian Politics in Spain*, [Chapel Hill: 1979].

<sup>37</sup> José Luis Gómez-Navarro, "Unión Patriótica: análisis de un partido del poder", *Historia Social*, n. 32-33, January-June 1985, 93-163; *El régimen de Primo de Rivera: reyes, dictaduras y dictadores* [Madrid: Cátedra, 1991]. Like González Calbet, Gómez Navarro was a former member of the Colectivo de Historia. His early works with González Calbet and Ernesto Portuondo already revealed a profound political transformation of Spain during the dictatorship. See "Aproximación al estudio de las élites políticas en la Dictadura de Primo de Rivera", *Cuadernos Económicos de I. C. E.*, 10, 183-208; "La Asamblea Nacional Consultiva: poder económico y poder político en la Dictadura de Primo de Rivera", *Estudios de Historia Social*, n. 14, July-September 1980, 157-188.

<sup>38</sup> Gómez-Navarro, *El régimen*, 8, 518-531.

<sup>39</sup> For a similar interpretation see the works of Miguel Ángel Perfecto, "Corporativismo y catolicismo social en la Dictadura de Primo de Rivera", *Studia Historica, Historia Contemporánea*, vol. II, n. 4,

dictatorship's social support, which initially included not only the socio-economic elites but also large sectors of the urban and rural middle-classes. Finally, these investigations understood the *primorriverista* dictatorship as part of the 1920s general trend towards the formation of dictatorial regimes in Eastern and Southern Europe. Thus, aiming to gain an understanding of the Spanish case in a European perspective, the works of Ben-Ami and Gómez Navarro compared Primo's regime to other dictatorships of the inter-war era, such as those in Italy, Greece, Yugoslavia, Poland, and Romania.<sup>40</sup>

My investigation takes these works as a starting point and focuses on the dictatorship's attempts to indoctrinate the population and gain mass support in order to consolidate itself. The *primorriverista* regime is understood here as part of the European upper-classes and bourgeoisie's reaction against the increasing growth of organised labour and the post-1917 revolutionary upheavals, which led to the establishment of a series of dictatorships in the 1920s. Together with pure physical repression, these regimes appealed to nationalist ideas in order to gain popular support, legitimise themselves and undermine the appeal of the Left. By diverting public attention towards external 'threats' and the 'enemy within', the European political elites aimed at producing a "negative integration", that is, the indoctrination of lower and middle-classes in nationalist ideas emphasising foreign and domestic foes.<sup>41</sup> This was not new. It has been a constant strategy throughout Europe since the turn of the century, notoriously in Germany, and the process only intensified after WWI.<sup>42</sup> It is not surprising, then, that the biggest efforts to nationalise the masses by the European states took place during the first half of the twentieth century, when the

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1985, 123-147; "Política social y regeneracionismo en la Dictadura de Primo de Rivera", *Studia Zamorensia*, vol. I, 1994. An overview on the historiography of the Dictatorship Primo de Rivera in Ignacio Olabarri, "Principales interpretaciones de la Dictadura de Primo de Rivera (1923-1930)", *Hispania*, LV/1, n. 189, January-April 1995, 315-325; and Carmen González Martínez, "La Dictadura de Primo de Rivera: una propuesta de análisis", *Anales de Historia Contemporánea*, 16 (2000), 337-408.

<sup>40</sup> Shlomo Ben-Ami, "Las dictaduras de los años veinte", in M. Cabrera, S. Juliá and P. Martín (eds.), *Europa en crisis, 1919-1939* [Madrid: 1991], 47-64. For a comparative approach to the period see also Martin Blinkhorn, "The Iberian States" in D. Mülberger (ed.) *The Social Bases of European Fascist Movements* [London: 1987], 320-348. A discussion of the historiography on the similarities between Primo and Mussolini's dictatorships in Juan del Alcázar Garrido, "Sobre las causas y connotaciones de la Dictadura primorriverista. El problema historiográfico", *Estudis d'Història Contemporània del País Valencià*, n. 6, 1985, 349-370.

<sup>41</sup> Paul Preston, "La Guerra Civil Europea, 1914-1945", in Romero and Saz (eds.), *El siglo XX. Historiografía e historia* [Valencia: 2002], 137-165.

<sup>42</sup> For the concept of negative integration see Wehler, *The German Empire*, 100-137.

continent was in the middle of a 'European civil war' between Right and Left.<sup>43</sup> As the old nineteenth century mechanisms of social control became increasingly useless in politically mobilised mass societies, the European dictatorships found mass nationalisation as the most useful tool of political indoctrination and a way to integrate the masses into politics via an anti-democratic mobilisation.

New trends in the historiography of the Fascist and authoritarian regimes have focused on the means by which these dictatorships attempted to gain a certain 'consensus' among the rural and urban middle classes. In order to investigate the popular support achieved by the authoritarian regimes, these studies have incorporated a series of social, ideological, economic and cultural factors to their analysis widening the causality range. As a result of this approach, the processes of nationalisation, the role of language and political symbolism have become essential factors for the understanding of authoritarian regimes.<sup>44</sup> The achievement of a certain level of social consensus by some dictatorships has been presented in close relation with the regimes' ability to create a patriotic liturgy in which the masses could feel their belonging to the national community. Myths, rites, nationalist public ceremonies and slogans were the key elements in drawing the people into anti-democratic political mobilisation and active participation in the national mystique, as a way to accomplish popular consensus and social cohesion.<sup>45</sup> My work follows this line of investigation and looks at the *primorriverista* formulation of a sacred concept of nation and the dictatorship's programme of mass mobilisation via the official party, the national militia and state-organised patriotic ceremonies.

In recent years, scholars have also returned to ideology as a main analytical tool for the study of Fascism and other types of extreme right political thought.<sup>46</sup> Ideology is a substantial aspect of the authoritarian regimes not only for what it constitutes at a discursive level but also because it is a construct in constant

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<sup>43</sup> For the states' increasing efforts to nationalise the masses in the first half of the twentieth century see Saz, *España contra España*, 48. For the concept of the European Civil war see Preston "La Guerra Civil Europea", 137-165.

<sup>44</sup> Eduardo González Calleja, "Sobre el dominio de las masas. Visiones y revisiones en la sociografía de los regímenes autoritarios y fascistas del periodo de entreguerras", in E. Acton and I. Saz (eds.), *La transición a la política de masas* [Valencia: 2001], 129-156.

<sup>45</sup> See Mosse, *The Nationalization*, for the German case and Emilio Gentile, *The Sacralization of Politics in Fascist Italy* [Cambridge (Mass): 1996], for Italy.

<sup>46</sup> For the regained importance of ideology in the studies of Fascist and authoritarian regimes see Roger Griffin, "Introduction", in Roger Griffin (ed.), *International Fascism* [London: 1998], 1-20; Marco Tarchi, *Fascismo. Teorie, interpretazione e modelli* [Roma-Bari: 2003].

reformulation deeply linked to social, political and institutional dynamics.<sup>47</sup> In the Spanish case, the direct ideological and political connection between Primo de Rivera and Franco's regimes has been an important subject of academic study. The fact that most of Primo's ideologues, known as "Alfonsine Monarchists" in the 1930s, gathered together after the dictator's fall in the Unión Monárquica Nacional, an extreme right-wing political party, and again in Renovación Española during the Second Republic, only to become members of the first Franco's governments at the beginning of the Civil War, has led many historians to concentrate their research on them in order to shed some light on the attributes of both dictatorships and the nature of the Spanish far-right.

To date studies on the Spanish extreme right in the 1920s and 1930s show two main currents of interpretation. On the one hand, historians such as Shlomo Ben-Ami, Paul Preston and Raúl Morodo have portrayed Alfonsine Monarchists as close to radical right and fascist European ideologies.<sup>48</sup> This approach takes a comprehensive view of the fascist phenomenon, in which the Alfonsine Monarchists are presented as a particular variety of Spanish Catholic fascists. Some other scholars have argued, on the other hand, that the Alfonsine Monarchists were not fascist because their Catholic traditionalist ideology impeded a complete shift into a radical modern and revolutionary doctrine. This interpretation, defended by historians such as Stanley Payne, Javier Tusell and Pedro González Cuevas, relies on a less flexible explanation of Fascism, stresses the links of Primo's ideologues with Spanish Catholic traditionalist thought, and considers the Falange and the J.O.N.S. as the only real fascist groups in 1930s Spain.<sup>49</sup> Moreover, this current of interpretation considers that Primo's ideologues never broke with liberal principles and European radical right

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<sup>47</sup> Saz, *España*, 54.

<sup>48</sup> Ben-Ami, "The Forerunners of Spanish Fascism: Unión Patriótica and Unión Monárquica", *European Studies Review*, vol. 9, January 1979; idem, *Fascism from above*; Raúl Morodo, *Acción Española. Orígenes ideológicos del franquismo* [Madrid: 1985]; Paul Preston, *La política de la venganza. El fascismo y el militarismo en la España del siglo XX* [Madrid: 1997]; *Las derechas españolas en el siglo XX: Autoritarismo, fascismo y golpismo* [Madrid: 1986]; "Alfonsine monarchism and the coming of the Spanish Civil War", in Martin Blinkhorn (ed.), *Spain in Conflict 1931-1939. Democracy and Its Enemies* [London: 1986], 160-182.

<sup>49</sup> Stanley Payne, *Falange. Historia del fascismo español* [Madrid: 1985]; idem, "La derecha en España y en Italia", in Payne (ed.) *Política y sociedad en la España del siglo XX*, [Madrid: 1978]; idem, *Fascism in Spain, 1923-1975* [Madison: 1999]; Javier Tusell, "Prefacio" in J. Tusell (ed.), *Las derechas españolas contemporáneas* [Madrid: 1996], 9-13; Pedro C. González Cuevas, *Acción Española* [Madrid, 1998].

thought did not become influential in the Alfonsine Monarchists' postulates until the 1930s.<sup>50</sup>

This study contributes to the debate on the nature of *primorriverista* ideology by analysing the official discourse and the regime's nationalist policies. It shows the discourse of Primo's ideologues as an attempt to frame a modern authoritarian nationalism in which the influence of Fascism becomes paramount. Catholicism would not be a handicap for the intellectual formulation of an anti-liberal nationalism but the core of a new ideology, which combined traditionalism with European radical right political thought to form a new sacred concept of nation. I use the term National Catholicism to refer to the *primorriverista* official ideology.<sup>51</sup> National Catholicism is understood here as the ideological formulation of those intellectuals at the *primorriverista* dictatorship's service who "blended the reactionary cultural values of traditional Spanish Catholicism with strident authoritarian nationalism and a smattering of corporative ideas of mixed lineage, [and] legitimated the authoritarian state as the form of political organisation best equipped to defend the economic interest and religious and cultural values associated with national unity and power".<sup>52</sup> In the second half of the 1920s, it is argued here, this ideological formulation became the official doctrine of the *primorriverista* dictatorship.

In order to study National Catholicism as a nationalist doctrine one has to take into consideration that this ideology was at first mainly developed by Primo's luminaries from a position of state power, that is, it was created by the state to gain support for the dictatorship and produce a controlled mobilisation of the masses. This ideology proposed a state-led nationalism, in which state institutions, such as the army, the educational system, and the official party were to play a key role in fostering the government's political message. This is what John Breuilly has named "governmental nationalism", Nazism and Italian Fascism being the paradigms of this

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<sup>50</sup> For this position see Genoveva García Queipo de Llano, "Los ideólogos de la Unión Patriótica", in *Homenaje a los profesores José M. Jover Zamora y Vicente Palacio Ataid*, [Madrid: 1990], 221-230 and Julio Gil Pecharrmán, "El conservadurismo alfonsino en la Segunda República" in J. Tusell (ed.), *Las derechas*, 211-235.

<sup>51</sup> Traditionally National Catholicism has referred to the political ideology of Franco's regime. The term was coined during the Civil War by one of the former Primo's ideologues, José Pemartín, but was not broadly used until the early 1960s to define the Francoist dictatorship's official doctrine. However, since the 1980s, scholars have used the term National Catholicism to describe the ideology of Francoism and have traced its origins to the turn of the twentieth century. For the use of National Catholicism to refer to the *primorriverista* ideologues' postulates in the 1920s see Alfonso Botti, *Cielo y dinero. El nacionalcatolicismo en España, 1881-1975* [Madrid: 1992], 59-71, 141-143, 151-158; Boyd, *Historia Patria*, 168.

sort of nationalism. According to Breuilly, one could confine governmental nationalism to two situations. Externally, “it refers to policies aimed at extending the territory” of the state. Internally, actions are “taken against specific groups and justified on the anti – or not national- character of these groups or individuals” (e. g. anti-Semitism of the Third Reich).<sup>53</sup> In addition, this governmental nationalism reinforces “when governments conflict with a nationalist opposition claiming to speak for another nation”. The dictatorship of Primo de Rivera certainly aimed to extend the Spanish territory outside of the Iberian Peninsula – or at least to control the Moroccan protectorate. However, National Catholicism concentrated more on the ‘internal enemy’. The demonic official description of Communists, Anarchists, and Basque and Catalan nationalists was accompanied by repressive policies against those considered enemies of the fatherland. In this case, nationalist ideology went hand to hand with nationalist governmental policies.

The significance of ideology in nationalism not only lies in its impact on governmental policies, but also in its ability to mobilise people. As Breuilly has pointed out, nationalist ideology “matters, not so much because it directly motivates most supporters of nationalist movements, but rather because it provides a conceptual map which enables people to relate their particular material and moral interests to a broader terrain of action.”<sup>54</sup> In this sense, *primorriverista* National Catholicism was related to the mobilisation of the masses the regime promoted from above. The mobilisation centred around the attempts of the official party (*Unión Patriótica*) and the *primorriverista* militia (*Somatén Nacional*) to incorporate a large part of the population hitherto uninvolved in politics or simply disenchanted with the corrupt liberal system. This mobilisation had a triple function for a regime aware of the need to incorporate the masses into politics. First, it was a means of gaining active popular support for itself. Second, it was a method to effectively destroy the oligarchic political system and the liberal parties of the Restoration by incorporating their political clienteles into the official party. Finally, as in Italy, it was a way to fight left and peripheral nationalist movements by including large sectors of the population from different classes into a ‘national’ party.

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<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*, 168.

<sup>53</sup> John Breuilly, *Nationalism and the State* [Manchester: 1993], 8-9.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*, 13.

## RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND FRAMEWORK

The study seeks to answer the following questions:

1. How was the new nationalist doctrine elaborated upon by the ideologues of Primo de Rivera? How did counterrevolutionary European doctrines influence the creation of this new nationalism? Were the main doctrinal principles of Francoism already implied in the 1920s *primorriverista* official discourse?
2. How were nationalist policies implemented by the regime? How was the nationalisation of the masses directed by the state?

The dissertation is divided into two thematic parts. The first one focuses on official *primorriverista* discourse and the nationalist policies implemented by the regime. The second part concentrates on the process of nationalisation, analysing the transmission of the official idea of Spain into society by the state agencies.

Following a first chapter on Spanish nationalism in the nineteenth century and the question of the nationalisation of the masses prior to 1923, Chapter 2 deals with the official discourse during the Military Directory (1923-1925). It examines the Primo's idea of Spain and the governmental policies seeking to undermine peripheral nationalists and regionalists' power during the first two years of the dictatorship.

Chapter 3 focuses on the *primorriverista* nationalist doctrine formulated during the Civil Directory (1926-1930). It shows how the regime's ideologues created an anti-liberal canon of the nation, combining different alternative conservative models of Spanish nationalism and radical right-wing European thought. This chapter also analyses National Catholicism within its European context comparing the *primorriverista* nationalist discourse to its Italian and French counterparts.

The second part of the study concentrates on the main agencies used by the state to transmit the ideological premises of the regime. Chapter 4 looks at the role of the army as an agency of nationalisation. It is beyond question that the political significance of the army in the regime was remarkable. During the Military Directory, Primo not only formed a cabinet of generals to rule Spain but also replaced civil governors by military governors in every province of the country. In addition, military government delegates (*delegados gubernativos*) were ascribed to all Spanish districts (*partidos judiciales*) to control political opposition, organise mass rallies of support for the regime, propagate the official doctrine in public ceremonies, and educate the

population in 'patriotic values'. The analysis of the indoctrination of military officers into *primorriverista* values by the regime's intelligentsia and how these values were subsequently transmitted into society sheds some light on the role the army played in the indoctrination of the masses.

Chapter 5 studies the *primorriverista* transformation of the educational system and its political consequences. Changes in the national curricula, indoctrination of teachers, development of state schools and expansion of Castilian language became the hallmarks of a reform aimed at increasing the nationalisation of the masses under *primorriverista* principles. Special attention is paid here to the implementation of official linguistic policies and the political implications of the process of 'Spanishization' in Catalonia. The problems the regime had in implementing the reform, facing the opposition of liberals, the Left, and, above all, the Catholic Church, illustrates how the transmission of the official doctrine was hampered by political and social forces that progressively turned against the dictator.

Finally, Chapter 6 examines the role of the official party and the militia. Created by the government, the *Unión Patriótica* and the *Somatén Nacional* were conceived as a catch-all party and militia respectively. The idea behind their formation had a twofold goal. First, it sought a controlled mass mobilisation that could channel popular support for the dictatorship and thus legitimise the regime. Second, it aimed to 'educate' the masses in *primorriverista* nationalist values. Therefore, the official militia and the state-sanctioned party became essential agencies in both the transmission of the dictatorship's nationalist discourse to the masses and popular mobilisation through nationalist rituals.

## APPROACH AND SOURCES

Contemporary scholarship offers two dominant approaches to understanding the appeal of nationalism. These approaches have been labelled instrumentalism and constructivism. Instrumentalists depict nationalism primarily as an instrument of state-building or socio-economic development.<sup>55</sup> This interpretation de-emphasises the internal logic of nationalism. Instead, it stresses the ways in which social elites manipulate the national idea to fulfil other objectives. The instrumentalist explanation offers a clear sense of the utility of nationalist ideology for members of political and

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<sup>55</sup> See, for instance, Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism* [Oxford: 1983]; Breuilly, *Nationalism*.



social elites who seek to mobilise popular support. Nevertheless, this approach fails to explain why nationalist appeals and rhetoric resonate so strongly in the audience.

Constructivism, on the other hand, emphasises the creative and contingent nature of national identity, as well as nationalism's flexibility to adapt itself to countless political and social contexts in the modern world. By linking nationalism to processes of communal imagination and to the redefinition of communal identity in response to the attenuation of traditional allegiances, constructivists explain the powerful attraction of nationalist ideology and its capacity to merge with a wide range of political ideologies.<sup>56</sup> However, little attention is paid to the actual national mobilisation and the techniques employed to achieve it.

In recent years, historians and political scientists have explored how political elites deploy narratives and invent traditions about the nation in order to mobilise popular support.<sup>57</sup> These analyses have opened the door to new interpretations which merge both instrumentalist and constructivist perspectives to understand nationalism in terms of its dynamism and its 'discursive formation' for the purpose of nationalist mobilisation.<sup>58</sup> It hardly needs to be said that the dictatorship of Primo de Rivera is an excellent example of nation-state-building from above, in which elites created a new nationalist discourse in order to mobilise popular support and defend the establishment. The utility of nationalist rhetoric to modernise the state structure and fight political opponents is beyond doubt; and so is the helpfulness of the instrumentalist approach for our case study. The functioning of state agencies in the transmission of the official nationalist doctrine is essential in understanding the regime's nationalisation of the masses.

Nevertheless, the importance of the ideological connotations of the discourse elaborated by Primo's ideologues cannot be overlooked. It is in the intersection of instrumentalist and constructivist perspectives where one can examine the creation of narratives about the nation and its transmission to society. The way in which this narrative was created in order to establish a new 'national imaginary' and mobilise

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<sup>56</sup> See Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities. Reflections of the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, [London: 1991].

<sup>57</sup> Anthony D. Smith, *The Ethnic Origins of Nations* [Oxford: 1986]; Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger (eds.), *The Invention of Tradition* [Cambridge: 1983]; Eric Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism since 1780* [Cambridge: 1990]; Elie Kedurie, *Nationalism* [Oxford: 1993].

<sup>58</sup> Craig J. Calhoun, *Nationalism* [Minneapolis: 1997]; Matthew Levinger and Paula Franklin Lytle, "Myth and Mobilisation. The triadic structure of nationalist rhetoric", *Nations and Nationalism*, 7 (2), (2001), 175-194.

political support can only be fully understood in relation to the ideological development of European conservative thought after WWI. In the same manner, the political principles that led the reforms of the state structures have to be considered in the light of the growing anti-liberal ideologies within Spain since the early twentieth century. Therefore, the analysis of the discursive formation of the new national identity cannot be separated from its political ideology and the role it played in gaining social support for the regime.

Two major ideas provide a theoretical framework on which this investigation is based. Firstly, Karl Deutsch, Ernest Gellner and John Breuilly's works on the role of the state in shaping nationalism from above establish a theoretical pattern on which Primo's dictatorship can be studied.<sup>59</sup> These authors have analysed the ideological transmission of nationalist postulates in relation to the expansion of the state and the improvement of social communications, as well as the relationship between intellectuals and the masses in the process of nationalisation. This is especially relevant in our case study since the *primorriverista* government invested a vast amount of public money in expanding the communication and transportation network. Moreover, in a time of economic growth, the dictatorship fostered the development of the state apparatus seeking to reach the most remote areas of the country.

Secondly, the concept of "political religion" becomes essential in order to define the whole socio-political process carried out by the dictatorship. The term 'political religion' in this work defines those particular modern political ideologies which incorporate in their discourse a religious rhetoric and symbolism in order to endow the nation with a sacred value.<sup>60</sup> The key concept in the configuration of political religions is the 'sacramental transference' (*transferencia de sacralidad*). This concept refers to the process through which the search for new discourses and symbols, leads to the creation of a "religion of the fatherland", substituting Catholicism as the political and social agent of cohesion after the French Revolution. Historically, French revolutionaries of the late eighteenth century were the first ones to realise the importance of replacing the role that traditional Catholicism played in politics and society. The need for sacred symbols led to the creation of a new political

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<sup>59</sup> Breuilly, *Nationalism*; Gellner, *Nations*; Karl Deutsch, *Nationalism and Social Communication* [Cambridge (Mass): 1966].

<sup>60</sup> Marcela Cristi, *From Civil to Political Religion* [Waterloo: 2001], 3.

discourse and symbolism as an alternative to Catholicism endowing the nation with sacred qualities and liturgies previously reserved for the Church.<sup>61</sup>

This process of 'sacramental transference' for the creation of a secular religion of the fatherland was detected in those romantic nationalists of the nineteenth century, such as Mazzini, and acquired special relevance in fascist movements during the 1920s and 1930s. As George Mosse and Emilio Gentile have shown, Italian, Spanish and German fascists elaborated secularized religions, which attempted to draw the people into anti-democratic political mobilization and active participation in the national mystique, as a way to accomplish popular consensus and social cohesion.<sup>62</sup> In these new fascist religions the role of rituals, symbolism and sacralized rhetoric became paramount. These were created in a syncretic manner, that is, incorporating and overlapping those traditional Christian liturgies and symbols with the fascist political discourse to idealise the nation-state.

The creation of political religions in nationalism can also be found in those traditionalist ideologies which emerged as a reaction against modern society and attempted to return to an idealised past in which the original nation was in its purest form. Basque nationalism at the beginning of the twentieth century, in Western Europe, and Russian Orthodox nationalism of nineteenth century, in the East, may be considered as two paradigms of this reactionary nationalism. In both cases nationality was essentially defined in religious terms and the nation was attached to a religious creed.<sup>63</sup> Basque nationalism as a political religion differs from the fascist example in the sense that no 'sacramental transference' occurred. What did occur was direct incorporation of religious principles into the political discourse. The starting point of the thinking of Sabino Arana, the founder of the Basque Nationalist Party, was an integrist Catholic mentality in which nationalism is inscribed within a religious framework. Inside this religious framework, the nationalist discourse was steeped in Catholic integrist principles. The nation was portrayed as a sacred entity and the figure of the 'good nationalist' was equated with the one of the Catholic believer.<sup>64</sup> In

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<sup>61</sup> Antonio Elorza, *La religión política* [San Sebastián: 1995], 8-10.

<sup>62</sup> Mosse, *The Nationalization of the Masses*, 2-20; Gentile, *The Sacralization*, ix-x. For the Francoist attempt to create a political religion see Elorza, "El franquismo, un proyecto de religión política", in Tusell, Gentile and Di Febo (eds), *Fascismo y franquismo. Cara a cara* [Madrid: 2004], 69-82. Michael Burleigh has also use the idea of "political religion" as a guiding notion for his analysis of the Nazi regime in *The Third Reich. A New History* [London: 2001], 5.

<sup>63</sup> Elorza, *La religión política*, 10, 57-87.

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*, 33-34.

other words, there is no previous secularization of the nation as in the fascist instance, but the Basque nation is conceived since the beginning in religious terms and as co-substantial to Catholicism.

The concept of 'political religion' applies to my investigation as an analytical tool for both the regime's ideology and the propagation of the official message to the masses. First, it allows us to see the ideological similarities and differences with other nationalisms, such as French integral nationalism and Italian Fascism. Second, it brings into focus the fascist model of propagation of a nationalist doctrine from above, and highlights the role of rituals, myths and symbolism in the process of sacralization of politics and the use of a 'religion of the fatherland' as a political element of social cohesion.

A study of this nature requires the analysis of a vast amount of primary sources. The analysis of *primorriverista* discourse relies on the examination of the press and the official propaganda machinery. The views of the dictator and the regime's ideologues are found in *La Nación*, the regime's mouthpiece, a series of provincial *primorriverista*-controlled newspapers and various propagandist books and pamphlets. Also important are the dictator's 'official communiqués to the Spanish people' - of compulsory inclusion in all newspapers and used by Primo to publicly explain his policies. Non-official press also provides valuable information on the *primorriverista* ideology and the implementation of policies. The issues of mobilisation, representation and symbolism can also be traced from the daily press insofar as it shows how public holidays and political rallies were celebrated during the dictatorship. In addition, military press, educational journals, *Unión Patriótica*, the journal of the official party and the *Somatén* bulletins are used to provide a comprehensive picture of those state agencies designed to implement the nationalisation of the masses.

However, it is important to be aware that an analysis of the press under Primo can provide us with only a part of the picture. Criticism of the regime's ideological principles and policies are rarely found in non-official journals due to the severe press censorship Primo imposed since his first day in power. A second group of primary sources this study is based on is governmental legislation. Royal Decrees and Royal Orders are the essential documents for analysing the regulation of nationalist policies and the repression of those groups considered anti-Spanish by the regime. The fact that the dictator himself often wrote the preamble of the most important laws

explaining the reason for their promulgation makes the use of legislation all the more significant. In addition, the transformation of state agencies is analysed here with consideration to the new legal status they were granted.

Yet tracing legal changes is not enough to measure how far the new legislation was implemented on the ground, let alone the impact it had on the population. The study of documents of the Bureau of the President (*Secretaría Auxiliar de Presidencia del Gobierno*), the Patriotic Propaganda Junta, the Ministry of Interior, Ministry of War, the Ministry of Public Instruction and the *Diputación Provincial de Barcelona* provide us with a vivid picture of the internal workings of the state apparatus and the multiple problems state agents faced in implementing the *primorriverista* nationalist legislation. Additionally, correspondence and secret reports between Primo and General Martínez Anido, Minister of the Interior and the regime's number 2, and provincial civil governors and governmental delegates show how the policies were implemented at a local level, and also the popular response to *primorriverista* attempts to indoctrinate the masses from above. This material is also useful to understand how the *primorriveristas* organised both repression and propaganda in every province of Spain.

# CHAPTER 1. THE ROOTS OF NATIONAL CATHOLICISM (1808-1923)

“Nations are the work of God”

(Antonio Cánovas)<sup>1</sup>

## INTRODUCTION

The aim of this chapter is twofold. First, it analyses the emergence of diverse conservative nationalist tendencies during the Restoration as the ideological antecedents of the *primorriverista* dictatorship. Second, it deals with the process of nation-building carried out from above during the nineteenth and early twentieth century in order to provide an explanation of the achievements and failures the liberal state had in the process of mass nationalisation before Primo took power.

Contrary to the view of some scholars, the following pages argue that the Restoration was the key period in the ideological construction and social propagation of modern conservative nationalism.<sup>2</sup> True, unlike Italy with the Nationalist Association, first, and the Fascists, later, Spanish nationalism was not centred around a single party. And yet Spanish nationalism permeated a wide range of elites, political movements, institutions and the media at the beginning of the twentieth century. It was in the discourse of political groups, such as the Maurists, the *Liga de Acción Monárquica*, and the National Catholic Association of Propagandist, the writings of the traditionalist theoreticians, like Juan Vázquez de Mella and Victor Pradera, the pages of conservative newspapers, like *ABC* and *El Debate*, and large sectors of the army where the ultranationalist concept of Spain that was later to inspire both Primo and Franco’s dictatorships was formulated.<sup>3</sup> This new nationalist concept presented some variations from one group to another, but by 1923 it certainly emphasised the three major components of Spanish conservative nationalism in the twentieth century, namely militarism, anti-regionalism, and the concept of Catholicism as the spiritual essence of the nation.

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<sup>1</sup> Cited in Vilar, “Estado, nación, patria en España y en Francia. 1870-1914”, 13.

<sup>2</sup> For the idea of Spain lacking a modern nationalism at the beginning of the twentieth century see Stanley Payne, *Fascism in Spain, 1923-1977* [Madison, 1999], 3-23; and Pedro González Cuevas, *Historia de las derechas españolas* [Madrid: 2000], 264.

<sup>3</sup> Fusi, “Centre and Periphery”, 38-39.

To understand conservative nationalism's ideological and political contribution to Primo's regime, we need to take into consideration the development of a modern nation-state throughout the nineteenth century and the emergence of new political alternatives to the Restoration system after 1898. Consequently, this chapter is divided into two parts. The first section deals with the two versions of Spanish nationalism, the liberal and the conservative, and the obstacles the elites found in the nation-building process during the nineteenth century. The second part analyses the new visions of the nation-state and Spanish nationalism, which emerged as alternative models to those represented by the Restoration system in the aftermath of the Spanish-American War. Here it is possible to distinguish between the postulates of the regenerationist movement, the military nationalism defended by professional officers and those factions which aimed to transform the political system from within, namely Maurists and Social Catholics. Finally, this second section deals with the increasing role played by the state in the process of nation building during the period 1898-1923.

## THE CREATION OF THE MODERN NATION (1808-1898)

These pages follow a constructivist approach in analysing the emergence and development of Spanish nationalism in the nineteenth century. The nation is understood here as an 'imagined community' constructed by nationalist ideology in the struggle to define communal identity in response to the attenuation of traditional allegiances.<sup>4</sup> The construction of the nation as an imagined community is a modern historical phenomenon, which began in the late eighteenth century parallel to the American and French Revolutions and spread all over Europe together with the creation of the liberal state in the early nineteenth century.<sup>5</sup> During this process of political mobilisation, the nation was endowed with a set of political rights and traditions partially invented *ad hoc*, which considered the community sovereign and attempted to consolidate unity among its members.<sup>6</sup>

In Spain, the co-existence of two opposing concepts of the nation can be traced back to the first decades of the nineteenth century, when the liberal and the

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<sup>4</sup> Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 5-7.

<sup>5</sup> Michael Mann, *Sources of Power* [Cambridge: 1993], vol. 2, 214-253.

<sup>6</sup> For the process of inventing traditions see Eric J Hobsbawm, "Introduction: Inventing Traditions" and "Mass-Producing Traditions: Europe 1870-1914", in Hobsbawm and Ranger (eds.), *The Invention of Tradition*; idem, *Nations and nationalism since 1780* [Cambridge: 1990].

traditionalist models of Spain as an imagined political and cultural community were first formulated.<sup>7</sup> Hence, the confrontation between the liberal-democratic and the conservative-traditionalist conceptions of nation was to play an outstanding role throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. An extreme manifestation of this conflict of identities was the idea of the 'two antagonist Spains' promoted by Franco during the Civil War and his 40 year-long dictatorship.<sup>8</sup> It is to the creation and development of these concepts of Spain that we turn our attention now.

### **The liberal version of the nation**

The modern liberal concept of Spain was created during the Peninsular War (1808-1814). The invasion of Napoleonic troops mobilised an important sector of the population in the struggle against the French and triggered the liberal revolution. In 1810, the National Assembly convened in Cádiz, assumed national sovereignty and defended a modern canon of Spain as a political community of citizens endowed with equal rights. The constitution, passed by the National Assembly in March 1812, established the "Spanish nation" as the utter sovereign and recognized Spain as a national, constitutional, parliamentary, and Catholic body<sup>9</sup>. Wartime also showed the invention of traditions to justify the abandoning of the absolutist regime. Liberals recreated and vindicated a medieval popular inheritance to define the national community in terms of a common history and culture.<sup>10</sup> Thus Aragon's medieval parliaments and the Castilian *Comuneros*' opposition to Habsburg new rules were highlighted as historical episodes in order to illustrate the 'traditional' origins of Spanish liberalism. In turn, this new vindication of the 'popular' and 'democratic' institutions justified liberal political views, which intended to create new participatory bodies within a modern state.<sup>11</sup> In other words, from its conception the liberal idea of Spain incorporated an important 'organicist' perception of the nation as a community shaped by history and culture, what implies the need to position liberalism within popularly accepted traditions.

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<sup>7</sup> Fox, *La invención*, 16.

<sup>8</sup> Radcliff, "La representación de la nación", in Rafael Cruz & Manuel Pérez, *Cultura y movilización social en la España contemporánea* [Madrid: 1997], 306.

<sup>9</sup> José María Portillo, *Revolución de nación* [Madrid: 2000], 259-492.

<sup>10</sup> Borja de Riquer, "Aproximació al nacionalisme espanyol contemporani", in *Orígens i formació dels nacionalismes a Espanya* [Reus: 1994], 251.

<sup>11</sup> Xosé-Manoel Núñez Seixas, *Los nacionalismos en la España contemporánea (siglos XIX y XX)* [Barcelona: 1999], 18-19.



During the Isabeline era (1833-1868) moderate liberals in power elaborated a nationalist mythology following the canons established in Cádiz. The fight against the French was then named 'War of Independence' and became a pillar of national myth making. The tens of monuments erected to the struggle's 'martyrs' and the conversion of 2 May into a national holiday are two good examples of this.<sup>12</sup> Scholars and artists also played a prominent role in the propagation of the moderate nationalist discourse. The 'people' became the main character in literature and academic books, which underlined the historical continuity of the Spanish *Volkgeist*.<sup>13</sup> The practical goal of this production of general histories of Spain was to legitimise the construction of the liberal state and the contemporary bourgeois social values. At the political level, the moderate discourse defended a uniform centralized state as the best way to cement the liberal order, and maintained a strong identification between Catholicism and Spanish national identity.<sup>14</sup>

A political alternative to the moderate canon of Spain came from progressive liberals and Republicans. They interpreted the medieval *cortes*, *fueros* (local charters), and religious tolerance as the hallmarks of the Spanish nation's 'Golden Age'. Conversely, the Habsburg rule, 'foreign' absolutism, and religious intolerance had in their view paved the way for Spanish decadence. Finally, freedom, democracy, and, in some versions, republicanism were the redemptive ideals of the liberal-progressive model.<sup>15</sup> Unlike the Moderates, progressive liberals supported the construction of a decentralized state. They justified this political position by idealizing the medieval local statutes and municipalities, as the 'historical protectors' of the so-called 'regional freedoms'.<sup>16</sup> Consequently, when advocating a decentralized state, democrats also claimed to be preserving the 'traditional' political structure of the nation. But ideological intentions and political realities proved difficult to marry. When progressive liberals were in power (1868-1874) the political system remained highly unstable and the federal project during the First Republic (1873-1874) could never be properly developed.

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<sup>12</sup> José Álvarez Junco, "La invención de la Guerra de la Independencia", *Studia Historica*, vol. 12 (1994), 74-99.

<sup>13</sup> Jover, "Caracteres del nacionalismo español", 8-14.

<sup>14</sup> Fox, *La invención*, 38.

<sup>15</sup> For the Republicans' nationalist postulates see de Blas, *Tradición republicana* and José María Jover, "Federalismo en España. Cara y cruz de una experiencia histórica", in G. Cortázar (ed.), *Nación y Estado en la España liberal*, [Madrid: 1994], 105-167.

<sup>16</sup> Núñez Seixas, *Los nacionalismos*, 22-30.

## The Conservative-Traditionalist canon of Spain

A competing concept of the nation is to be found in traditionalist thought. It also has its early formulations in the 'War of Independence', when defenders of the *Ancien Régime* defined the Spanish nation as intrinsically Catholic and mobilised the population to fight the 'atheist invader'. The *Serviles*, Fernando VII supporters, first, and the Carlists, later, considered liberal ideas as 'Anti-Spanish' and against the country's 'traditions'. These alleged 'traditions' were nothing but a modern invention of those reactionary forces. In fact, the *Serviles* copied the traditionalist discourse elaborated in France during the Revolution and used the anti-liberal rhetoric as an ideological tool to defend the 'Altar and the Crown'.<sup>17</sup> But whatever the novelty of these postulates, the truth is that the reactionaries of the early nineteenth century laid the foundations of traditionalist thought and many of their ideas were used to build the Catholic model of Spain fifty years later.

The *Serviles* and the Carlists, however, did not appeal to the nation in the modern sense of the term to mobilise the people but to traditional legitimacies. Notwithstanding their idealization of the past, the concept of modern nation as a sovereign political community was far too revolutionary to be fully integrated in their political discourse. Indeed, traditionalist thought was formulated as a reaction to the liberal revolution, and eventually provided traditionalist nationalism of the second half of the nineteenth century with a strong anti-modern character.<sup>18</sup>

It was not until the second half of the nineteenth century that reactionary thinkers realised the potent appeal of nationalist legitimacy and that the traditionalist version of the nation was elaborated by Catholic historians. In this model, expressed on the works of Víctor Gebhart, Antonio Merri y Colón and, above all, Marcelino Menéndez Pelayo, Catholic unity was the common denominator of the foundation of the Spanish nationality and legitimised the monarchy as the national political institution par excellence.<sup>19</sup> Traditionalist historians explained the pinnacle of Spanish power in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries as a consequence of the struggle against foreign heresy in Europe and the evangelisation of the Americas. They also

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<sup>17</sup> Javier Herrero, *Los orígenes del pensamiento reaccionario* [Madrid: 1971], 14.

<sup>18</sup> Antonio Elorza, "Las Ideologías de Resistencia a la Modernización y el Nacionalismo", *Historia Contemporánea*, n. 4, (1990), 341-353.

<sup>19</sup> José Álvarez Junco, *Mater Dolorosa. La idea de España en el siglo XIX* [Madrid: 2001], 405-464; Foard, "The Spanish Fichte", 83-97.

held French rationalism and German Krausism responsible for the artificial introduction of revolutionary ideas that had supposedly destroyed the unity of Spanish culture.<sup>20</sup> Contrary to the liberal-progressive model, traditionalists found the Spanish Golden Age in the times of the first Habsburgs and blamed Bourbon reformism for the nation's decadence. Their redemptive ideal was a community politically and religiously united, led by a strong Crown and an independent Catholic Church.

It hardly needs to be said that this theocratic and romantic conception of the nation was adopted by all those traditionalist groups opposed to the liberal state, such as the Carlists, the Catholic Integrists, and significant sectors of the Catholic hierarchy. Concerning the state structure, the traditionalist advocated a decentralised Spain, where regions would maintain their medieval privileges. Then the restoration of the *Ancien Régime* would entail the reinstatement of old territorial statutes. This in turn would signal the return to the nation's 'Golden Era'.<sup>21</sup> Against liberal centralisation and throughout the nineteenth century, the defence of the *fueros* increasingly became a propagandist tool to mobilise support for the traditionalist cause, gaining significant success in the rural areas of Navarre, the Basque region, and Catalonia.

During the Restoration, the right of the Conservative party and some dissident Integrists groups, most notably the Catholic Union of Alejandro Pidal y Mon, defended a very similar pattern of the Spanish nation, within the liberal monarchic system. Antonio Cánovas, the architect of the Restoration system and Conservative leader, conceived of nations as biological organisms with their own 'national character' shaped through the centuries by tradition and culture.<sup>22</sup> This historicist-romantic conception did not completely rule out the liberal idea of a shared will and communal consciousness in the formation of nations, but it certainly gave more importance to divine intervention. Beyond all geographical, cultural, racial and linguistic aspects, "nations were the work of God", Cánovas stated in a conference in 1882.<sup>23</sup> The 'sacralization' of the fatherland was also present in the Conservative idea of Spain.

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<sup>20</sup> Boyd, *Historia*, 99-103.

<sup>21</sup> Núñez Seixas, *Los nacionalismos*, 23.

<sup>22</sup> Francisco Abad, "Positivismo y nacionalismo en Cánovas, Manéndez Pidal y Pérez Galdós", in *Homenaje a los profesores Jover Zamora y Julio Palacio Ataid*, vol.1, [Madrid: 199], 160-164.

<sup>23</sup> Vilar, "Estado, nación", 13.

Unlike the traditionalists, however, these sectors of the Right were intensely centralist. Following the moderate-liberals' route, they bid for the end of medieval regional privileges and attempted to unify legislation and the state administration during the last quarter of the century. This process of centralisation ran parallel to the emergence of a Castilian-centred interpretation of Spanish history, which became dominant at the turn of the century. According to this view, Castile had been the leading region in the formation of Spain and, therefore, the 'national psychology' was of Castilian origin. Also detectable in art and literature, the historical centrality of Castile in the nation-building process became a cultural artefact at the service of political nationalism.<sup>24</sup>

## THE NATIONALISATION OF THE MASSES IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

In recent years scholars have discussed the weaknesses and strengths of the process of nationalisation of the masses in nineteenth-century Spain. Today the original perception of the process as weak and unsuccessful has been partially revised and the Spanish case does not seem so exceptional within the European context.<sup>25</sup> As in many other academic debates, the question of whether the Spanish nationalisation of the masses was successful or not very much depends on the countries Spain is compared to. When compared to the most accomplished case, France, the Spanish process of nationalising the country's population seems weak in the nineteenth century. If compared to the United Kingdom or Germany, where regional identities have proved durable, then the Spanish case is not so exceptional. And if the comparison is undertaken considering multi-national empires with uneven industrial developments and a plethora of ethnic groups within its borders, such as the Austro-Hungarian empire, then the conclusion would be that the Spanish case was a success.<sup>26</sup> For the purpose of this investigation it is important to notice the different factors that intervened in the process of the nationalisation of the masses in Spain, namely socio-economic, state-structural, political, cultural and symbolic. The

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<sup>24</sup> Inman Fox, "Spain as Castile: Nationalism and national identity", in David Gies (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Modern Spanish Culture* [Cambridge: 1999], 21-36.

<sup>25</sup> See the introduction to this thesis.

<sup>26</sup> José Álvarez Junco, "El nacionalismo español: las insuficiencias estatales", *Historia Social*, n. 40, (2001), 51.

achievements and shortcomings of the Restoration state set the stage in which the *primorriverista* regime had to operate.

Throughout the nineteenth century the Spanish economy was transformed, a capitalist system firmly consolidated and a powerful bourgeoisie emerged.<sup>27</sup> Nevertheless, the transition from an agrarian society to a capitalist one was gradual and territorially uneven. Industrialisation took place slowly in Catalonia and rapidly in Vizcaya and Asturias in the last decades of the century - all peripheral regions far from the geographical centre of political power: Madrid. As a result, the creation of a 'national market', a by-product of the industrial revolution, was incomplete until the last quarter of the century and internal customs and taxation privileges remained in use until 1876 in the Basque provinces and Navarre. Moreover, Spain lacked an integrated system of social communications, which made the spread of modern values and the transmission of a common national identity more difficult. Regional and local identities, which had developed during the *Ancien Régime*, remained important throughout the entire century.<sup>28</sup> The improvement in the structure of communications that would have made possible the transmission of ideas and standardisation of a 'national culture' had to wait until the turn of the century.

The liberal revolutions, however, led to profound social and political transformations during the nineteenth century.<sup>29</sup> One of the main outcomes of the revolutions was the creation of the liberal state – a pillar in the development of capitalism and a shaper of a national culture at the same time. On the one hand, the liberal state nationalised basic wealth (lands, mines, railways, etc) and immediately afterwards privatised it, creating a class of property owners. Hence, it was through the state that the speculative wealth of early capitalism was forged and the new economic development legally adapted to serve the interests of the ruling classes.<sup>30</sup> Additionally, liberals promoted the idea of a bourgeois citizenry via new state agencies, such as the military, the educational system, the judicial system and the civil

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<sup>27</sup> Fusi and Palafox, *España*, 87-152.

<sup>28</sup> Borja de Riquer, "El surgimiento de las nuevas nacionalidades catalana y vasca en el siglo XIX", in Rafael Sánchez Montero (ed.), *En torno al 98*, [Huelva: 2000], vol. 1, 91-112.

<sup>29</sup> Isabel Burdiel, "La consolidación del liberalismo y el punto de fuga de la monarquía (1843-1870)", in Suárez Cortina (ed.), *Las máscaras de la libertad. El liberalismo español, 1808-1950* [Madrid: 2003], 101-133.

<sup>30</sup> Eduardo Manzano Moreno and Juan Sisinio Pérez Garzón, "A Difficult Nation? History and Nationalism in contemporary Spain", in Rannan Rein (ed.), *Spanish Memories*, vol. 14, n. 1-2, Fall 2002, 261.

administration, which led to the consolidation of a civic political nationalism among the middle classes.<sup>31</sup>

Nevertheless, the liberal state was chronically in debt during the nineteenth century. This precluded the formation of powerful state agencies and therefore allowed the subsistence of old forms of legitimacies and local identities. The national educational system, for example, was not created until 1857 and suffered an endemic shortage of resources. This explains the high level of illiteracy in Spain compared to other Western European states (59% of the population was illiterate in 1900) and the persistence of regional languages throughout the nineteenth century. In addition, the strong involvement of the Catholic Church in the contents of state education hindered the promotion of civic values associated with the preponderance of the nation as the ultimate source of state legitimacy.<sup>32</sup>

The army did not obtain better results than the educational system as a state agency of nationalisation. The Spanish army was not national, in the revolutionary sense of the 'nation in arms', but deeply divided the privileged and lower classes. An exception-riddled conscription system, in which the upper and middle classes paid members of the lower classes 'to substitute' for them in compulsory enlistment, could not promote the idea of national integration. Conversely, monetary redemption showed the lower classes that service to the fatherland was not an honour but a burden and ultimately alienated them from this type of patriotic integration.<sup>33</sup> Moreover, the absence of foreign threat after the Napoleonic wars and the fact that Spain was not involved in any major international war from 1814 to 1898 prevented massive numbers of people from being called to arms and instilled with patriotic fervour. Nonetheless, in the second half of the century, diverse colonial adventures were partially supported by the lower classes and liberals and traditionalists united in their support of the Moroccan campaign (1859-1861) in the name of national grandeur. In 1898, the outbreak of the Spanish-American war was greeted with popular jingoism by thousands in the streets, which shows a national identity had also been acquired by many in the lower-classes.

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<sup>31</sup> Juan Sisinio Pérez Garzón, "El nacionalismo español en sus orígenes. Factores de configuración", in Anna María García Rovira (ed.), *España ¿nación de naciones?* [Madrid: 2002], 53-86.

<sup>32</sup> Carolyn Boyd, "El pasado escindido: la enseñanza de la Historia en la escuelas españolas, 1875-1900", *Hispania*, n. 209 (2001), 859-878; Nuñez Seixas, *Los nacionalismos*, 23-24.

<sup>33</sup> Álvarez Junco, "Nation-Building, 99-100.

Finally, the centralist administrative system defended first by the moderates and later by the conservatives proved difficult to implement. The division of the country into 49 provinces and the unification of local governments in 1833, the creation of the Civil Governors as state representatives in every province in 1844, the creation of the Civil Guard (1844) to ensure the monopoly of violence, and the compilations of the Penal Code (1848) and Civil Code (1889) slowly set the administrative and legal bases of the state. Nonetheless, centralism took long to overcome the secular fragmentation of Spain's territory and the unity of the state remained highly artificial until well into the nineteenth century. The political and economic problems the liberal state faced led to a progressive but inefficient building of the modern administration and the province remained the centre of political and social life.<sup>34</sup> In fact, the state throughout the nineteenth century was characterised by a profound contrast between legal centralism and real localism.<sup>35</sup>

At the political level, there can be few doubts that the civil wars between Liberals and Carlists did little for the propagation of a uniform idea of Spain. However, while liberals and traditionalists defended antagonistic views, what was at stake was not the existence of the Spanish nation, something that both sides never questioned, but the political organisation of the state.<sup>36</sup> In fact, the Carlist Wars had a significant mobilising effect among the popular classes. For years, thousands of Spaniards were called to arms to fight in the name of the nation (whether liberal or traditionalist) against the 'enemy within'.

Yet it was the very oligarchic nature of the liberal system which mostly precluded a more effective nationalisation of the masses. Moderate and conservative liberals framed elitist political systems, in which electoral participation was kept to a minimum -or it was openly fraudulent when the franchise was enlarged. A system like the Restoration, based on the manipulation of the electoral machine from Madrid but giving local bosses (*caciques*) a great deal of autonomy in regional matters, could hardly encouraged popular identification with the official idea of the nation-state. On the contrary, liberal governments, usually oligarchies of landowners and enriched bourgeoisie were reluctant to encourage patriotic mobilisations and, in fact, attempted

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<sup>34</sup> Juan Pablo Fusi, "Centralismo y localismo: la formación del estado español" in Guillermo Cortazar (ed.), *Nación y Estado en la España liberal*, [Madrid: 1994], 83-87.

<sup>35</sup> Fusi, "Centre", 34.

<sup>36</sup> Archilés and Martí, "Un país tan extraño como cualquier otro", 251.

to demobilise the masses.<sup>37</sup> Nor was the bourgeoisie of the industrialised periphery willing to challenge the state by mobilising the lower classes. Always dependent on the state for the protection of their economic interests, the peripheral bourgeoisie had close links with the ruling elite in Madrid and shared a common culture.<sup>38</sup> Therefore, the oligarchic liberal state had a twofold effect in terms of nationalisation. First, the lack of political representation led to a widespread political apathy among the masses, which could hardly identify with the official concept of nation. Second, the oligarchic political practices deepened the gap between what was perceived to be the 'legal country', as represented by the liberal constitutions, and the 'real country', represented by the people.

At the cultural level, the process of symbolization used by groups to construct their (national) identities illustrated in the Spanish case, first, the different political conceptions of the nation and, second, the separation between state elites and the masses. In opposition to the symbols of the *Ancien Régime*, liberals introduced the most visible symbols of the state, the flag and the anthem. In 1843, the national flag was adopted but the national anthem would only be introduced in 1908. Moreover, Republicans challenged these symbols. They changed the flag and banned the 'royalist' anthem when in government, leading to a longstanding conflict only resolved in the late 1970s. This competing symbolism was in line with the lack of consensus on national myths and Golden Ages. As the century progressed, democrats and republicans emphasised the civic and secular symbols of the nation, while, more successfully, conservatives and traditionalists adopted the Catholic symbolic universe to represent the national identity.<sup>39</sup>

Regarding role of cultural processes in the construction of national identity, the liberal state promoted its vision of Spain in various fields, the 'national' prizes on historic paintings and patriotic writings being two good examples of this. As in other Western European countries, in the last decades of the century the Spanish state structured public life around national symbols.<sup>40</sup> Ceremonies, rituals, and symbols, such as the cult to the 'patriotic martyrs', became a fundamental part of the official representation of the nation state. However, the popular classes remained absent from these civic state ceremonies more often than not. More importantly, this detachment

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<sup>37</sup> Álvarez Junco, "Nation-Building", 100.

<sup>38</sup> Balfour, *The End*, 134.

<sup>39</sup> Radcliff, "La representación de la nación", 306-325.



from the 'official nation' sometimes turned into hostility and the masses developed popular counter-rituals. Alternative anthems, such as the International and the liberal *Himno de Riego*, and popular culture, exemplified in bullfighting, religious parades, and *zarzuelas*, challenged the symbols imposed from above.<sup>41</sup>

The gap between the elites and the popular classes in the symbolic and ceremonial construction of the nation shows the difficulties Spanish liberals faced in the nationalisation of the masses from above. However, this should not lead us to conclude that the process of nationalisation as a whole was a failure. The invention of alternative popular ceremonials and symbolism, popular support for war in 1895-1898, expressions of Spanish nationalism in languages other than Castilian in Catalan, Galician, and Basque newspapers, and the discussion in the political arena about the structure of the Spanish nation-state illustrate that other mechanisms of nationalisation different than the state's, such as ideologies, the press and the Church, had made an impact on the creation of a national community throughout the nineteenth century.

Additionally, one should take into consideration that the problems the Spanish liberal state faced were not exceptional in Western Europe. In France and Italy the idea of the existence of two antagonistic nations within one state (the two Frances and the two Italys) remained well into the twentieth century;<sup>42</sup> the conflict between local-provincial powers versus national representatives was common all around Europe as the liberal state developed;<sup>43</sup> monetary redemption of the military service lasted until the 1880s in France;<sup>44</sup> educational systems were unable to impose the official language in many French, Italian and German regions and vernacular dialects were widely used until WWI; nor were regional political movements seeking home rule or independence unusual in the United Kingdom, Italy, Germany or France at the turn of the twentieth century.<sup>45</sup>

The Spanish case in the nineteenth century shows the development of a national political language and a national political culture but not the reality of a modern mass political nationalist movement.<sup>46</sup> Yet things changed dramatically at the

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<sup>40</sup> Vilar, "Estado, nación", 11.

<sup>41</sup> Carlos Serrano, *El nacimiento de Carmen. Símbolos, mitos y nación*. [Madrid: 1999], 16, 114-115; Jon Juaristi, "El ruedo ibérico. Mitos y símbolos en el nacionalismo español", *Cuadernos de Alzate*, n. 16, May 1997, 19-31.

<sup>42</sup> Vicente Cacho Viu, "La imagen de las dos Españas", *Revista de Occidente*, May 1986, n. 60, 54-62.

<sup>43</sup> Mann, *Sources of Power*, 5.

<sup>44</sup> Weber, *Peasants into Frenchmen*, 292-302.

<sup>45</sup> Núñez Seixas, "Proyectos alternativos", 93-115.

<sup>46</sup> Fusi, "Centre", 35; Manzano & Pérez, "A Difficult Nation?", 262.

turn of the century. The acceleration of the socio-economic transformations and the 'politicisation' of broad sectors of society hitherto uninvolved deepened into the process of nationalisation in the first two decades of the twentieth century. As a result, many in the middle and lower classes became much more receptive to nationalist messages. At the same time, the Spanish defeat against the United States and the loss of the empire in the Caribbean and the Pacific in 1898 led to a profound reformulation of Spanish nationalism by intellectuals and politicians, which was eventually integrated as the ideological bases of Primo's dictatorship.

## **FROM MILITARY DISASTER TO MILITARY RULE (1898-1923)**

### **The reformulation of Spanish Nationalism**

During the month of April 1898, jingoism was strongly felt throughout most of the Spanish society. As the war with the United States approached, newspapers speculated on the possibility of a rapid Spanish victory, the urban masses patriotically gathered to support the struggle and political parties united in their defence of the military.<sup>47</sup> By early May, the Spanish fleet lay at the bottom of the sea and Spain had lost the remains of her once great empire to the USA. The 'Disaster' of 1898, as it came to be known, signals a turning point in the development of modern Spanish nationalism. As in the Italian case after the defeat at the hands of the Ethiopians at Adowa (1896), the loss led to a crisis of national identity. An entire generation of intellectuals, the so-called 'Generation of 1898', devoted its work to searching for the essences of the nation and thereby solve the 'problem of Spain'. Political groups presented diverse alternatives to 'regenerate' the 'sick' nation. Disaffection with the nation-state became paramount. The lower classes radicalised and demanded deep social and political changes, while Catalan regionalism and Basque nationalism increased their social support.

Sebastian Balfour has differentiated three new visions of the nation-state and Spanish nationalism, which emerged in the aftermath of the 'Disaster' as alternative

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<sup>47</sup> Amongst the political parties only socialists and federal republicans opposed war. See, Gregorio Alonso, "La mirada de la izquierda. Las guerras coloniales de 1898 desde la prensa socialista y federal", in Sánchez (ed.), *En torno al 98*, vol. II, 261-269. For the patriotic demonstrations see Manuel Pérez Ledesma, "La sociedad española, la guerra y la derrota", in Pan-Montojo, *Más se perdió en Cuba*, 100-102.

models to those represented by the Restoration.<sup>48</sup> First, the Catalan bourgeoisie promoted a neo-colonial policy to replace the markets lost in the Caribbean and the modernisation of the whole of Spain based on the industrial Catalan model. It also aimed to invigorate regional autonomy as a way of regenerating Spain. Second, the regenerationist movement, supported by disaffected sections of the middle classes, sought the creation of a modern secular state. Lastly, military nationalism emerged amongst professional officers. It combined plans for state modernisation with the postulates of conservative nationalism. It was profoundly centralist and sought to modernise the country via an authoritarian state. It is in the military and regenerationist models that one can find the immediate ideological origins of Primo's dictatorship and where we turn our attention now.

The idea of national regeneration was certainly not invented at the turn of the century but during the 1890s, and especially after the military defeat in Cuba and the Philippines, cultural elites steadily propagated the need for 'national rebirth'. During the 25 years that followed the loss of the Empire, the Generation of 1898, which includes figures such as Miguel Unamuno, Joaquín Costa, Azorín, Ramiro de Maeztu, Pío Baroja and Ángel Ganivet, and later the Generation of 1914, led by the philosopher José Ortega y Gasset, sought to identify the essences of the Spanish national character. Their goal was to explain contemporary reality through an understanding of the national character and ultimately provide practical solutions for Spanish regeneration. Despite the diversity of analyses, it is possible to draw some common traits in the regenerationist discourse. First, it conceived the nation as an organic whole that had to be understood as an evolutionary process. This view combined romantic German historicism and new currents of vitalism, but it was also steeped in Social-Darwinist postulates and geographical determinism, so much in vogue in *fin-de-siècle* Europe.<sup>49</sup>

Second, it highlighted the centrality of Castile in the historical formation of the nation and Castilian as the national language; and yet it also advocated the regeneration of the municipalities and local life as the starting point of national reconstruction. On the one hand, these postulates challenged the Restoration centralist

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<sup>48</sup> Sebastin Balfour, "'The Lion and the Pig': Nationalism and National Identity in *Fin-de-Siècle* Spain", in Smith and Mar-Molinero (eds.), *Nationalism and the Nation in the Iberian Peninsula*, 113-115.

<sup>49</sup> Eric Storm, "El nacionalismo de los intelectuales: Unamuno, Costa y Ganivet", in, *En torno al 98*, 392-393, 400.

system, which was considered inefficient and guilty of destroying 'popular national life'. On the other, regenerationists criticised the emerging Catalan and Basque nationalism as artificial, bourgeois, and backward looking. They denounced the peripheral middle-classes turning into regionalist movements as selfish and suicidal, but hold the oligarchic system of the Restoration ultimately responsible for the emergence of the 'separatist' ideas.<sup>50</sup> In doing so, the Regenerationists importantly contributed to the growth of a new Spanish nationalism, as well as to the nascent dialectic between Spanish and peripheral nationalism, which dominated the twentieth century.

In the political arena, the regenerationist movement proposed practical reforms to achieve the 'Europeanisation' (i.e. modernisation) of the country. Its leading figure, Joaquín Costa, demanded the end of the oligarchic political system and advocated a state-led agrarian reform as the best manner in which to modernise the country. The movement first crystallized soon after the 'Disaster' in the creation of the *Unión Nacional*, which gathered together small farmers and merchants of Castile and Aragon, led by Joaquín Costa, and representatives of the chambers of commerce from all over Spain, led by Basilio Paraíso. However, this petty-bourgeois alliance, with contradictory economic and ideological interests, was unable to form a political party to challenge the establishment, and the movement rapidly faded away in the early 1900s. Increasingly disappointed by the lack of success of the regenerationist movement, Costa turned towards the republicans and called for a radical change. It was then that he appealed to a hazily defined providential figure, an "iron surgeon", who would lead the national revolution and operate on the "sick body" of Spain. Costa's notion of the "iron surgeon" was in fact related to the ideas of nineteenth century praetorian liberalism and sought a leading figure that could overcome the ruling oligarchies to bring a real democracy to Spain.<sup>51</sup> Nevertheless, two decades later, Miguel Primo de Rivera would seize power claiming to be the very "iron surgeon" Costa had called for.

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<sup>50</sup> Ramiro de Maeztu, *Hacia otra España* [Madrid, 1998], 187-202; Ortega, *España invertebrada*, [Madrid: 1993], 39, 46, 69.

<sup>51</sup> Sebastian Balfour, "Riot, Regeneration and Reaction: Spain in the Aftermath of the 1898 Disaster", *The Historical Journal*, 38, 2 (1995), 412-413. This idea of an 'iron surgeon' was not supported by other regenerationists, who expressed their concerns about this hypothetical figure. See, for instance, Ortega y Gasset, "Sencillos reflexiones. II", *El Imparcial*, 22-8 -1910, in José Ortega y Gasset, *Textos sobre el 98. Escritos políticos (1908-1914)* [Madrid: 1998], 157-161.

The second political attempt based on the postulates of the regenerationist movement was the creation of the Reformist Party (1913) and the Spanish League of Political Action (1914) by the members of the Generation of 1914. Ortega y Gasset, Gumersindo Azcárate, Melquiades Álvarez, and Manuel Azaña promulgated a new liberalism steeped in democratic socialism, similar to that developed by the Liberal Party in Britain and the Radicals in France. The reformist aim was to transform the oligarchic liberal regime into a real democracy and provide Spaniards with social reform in the same manner as their western neighbours.<sup>52</sup> The importance of education in building a new nation was clearly seen by the Generation of 1914. Reformists steadily propagated their ideas of national regeneration among the middle classes in an attempt to educate those sectors of Spanish society called to realise the peaceful revolution.<sup>53</sup> But, as in the previous decade, the Restoration system proved rigid enough as to resist any kind of transformation from the outside.

A second new version of Spanish nationalism came out of the military barracks at the turn of the century. Military nationalism aimed to transform the nation-state and combined the requirement of modernisation with conservative postulates.<sup>54</sup> After 1898, professional officers openly advocated modernising the nation via authoritarian state.<sup>55</sup> In their view, Spain needed a strong economy, a regimented society, and an up to date army ready for new imperialist expansions to solve the post-colonial crisis. To achieve these aims the military demanded internal state reforms, including gearing industry towards arms production, a better educational system, an honest public administration and restructuring the relationship state-Catholic Church.<sup>56</sup> For the military, these transformations could not be carried out by the inefficient two-party system of the Restoration. They would rather require a strong government led by a general and not subordinated to parliamentary control.

Whilst military nationalism shared some features with regenerationism and the call for a temporary dictatorship could somehow resemble the figure of the 'iron surgeon', the truth is that the professional officers had little sympathy for the movement led by Paraiso and Costa. Military press steadily attacked the *Unión*

<sup>52</sup> Vicente Cacho Viú, *Los intelectuales y la política* [Madrid: 2000], 87-93.

<sup>53</sup> José Luis Abellán, *Ortega y Gasset y los orígenes de la transición democrática* [Madrid: 2000], 55-56.

<sup>54</sup> Geoffrey Jensen, "Military Nationalism and the State. The case of Fin-de-Siècle Spain", *Nations and Nationalism*, (6), 2, (2000), 257-274.

<sup>55</sup> Balfour, "The Lion" 116.

<sup>56</sup> Balfour, *The End*, 171.

*Nacional*, which it saw as an egoist petit-bourgeois movement, and defended a vague mixture of nascent corporatism and populism.<sup>57</sup> The army not only felt it was the guarantor of the nation state but, moreover, saw itself as the interpreter of the popular will.<sup>58</sup> In a corrupt political system in which male universal suffrage was little more than a charade, army officers often presented themselves as the ‘real’ voice of the masses. Despite the decline of left-wing republican officers and the clear turn rightwards of the army since 1898, the rhetoric of populism remained well into the twentieth century.<sup>59</sup>

However, this populism should not lead us to consider the military as the champions of democratic reforms. Almost invariably, the army sided with the Restoration civilian elites and was steadily used for internal repression. In reality, there was nothing democratic in this populist rhetoric. Scorn for the working classes was manifest in the military press and most officials feared the inclusion of the masses in the political arena. When using the populist discourse the army was indeed appealing to certain sectors of the population, mostly the middle-classes, or, to put it in military terms, “the healthy segments” of society.<sup>60</sup> Moreover, this new military nationalism shared many of the myths of the conservative-traditionalist canon of the second half of the nineteenth century. It saw in the martial spirit of the Reconquest, the colonization of America, the fight against Protestants, and the ‘War of Independence’ the real ‘soul’ of the nation.<sup>61</sup>

Ideologically military nationalism gained momentum after the war due to the growing strength of Catalan regionalism and, to a lesser extent, Basque nationalism, as well as the latent anti-militarism of the working class. In defining itself as the repository of the quintessential qualities of the fatherland, the army considered criticism of the military as an attack on the patria and regionalism and peripheral nationalism as mere treason to the nation. According to this logic, political violence to punish enemies of national unity became a patriotic duty.<sup>62</sup> In 1902, on three different

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<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*, 171.

<sup>58</sup> González Calbet, *La Dictadura*, 49.

<sup>59</sup> For the Republicans relationship with the army see, José Alvarez Junco, “Leftist Militarism and Anti-Militarism, 1875-1936” in Bañón and Barker (eds.), *Armed Forces and Society in Spain* [New York: 1988], 149- 175.

<sup>60</sup> Francisco Clocha, “Military Press of the Restoration”, in *Armed Forces and Society in Spain*, 199.

<sup>61</sup> Sebastian Balfour and Pablo La Porte, “Spanish Military Cultures and the Moroccan Wars”, *European History Quarterly*, 2000, Vol. 30 (3), 314.

<sup>62</sup> Carolyn Boyd, “Violencia pretoriana: del *Cu-cut!* al 23-F” in Santos Juliá (ed.) *Violencia política en la España del siglo XX* [Madrid: 2000], 300-301.

occasions, officers attacked Catalan and Basque nationalist demonstrators.<sup>63</sup> On the evening of 25 November 1905, after a series of satirical cartoons mocking the army appeared in the journal *Cu-Cut*, junior officers assaulted the editorial offices of the publication and then moved on to destroy the plant of the Catalanist newspaper *La Veu de Catalunya*.

The reactions to the assault showed how deep anti-Catalanist sentiments were in many sectors of the establishment. The action was applauded almost unanimously in garrisons throughout Spain, crowds of officers gathered at stations to greet military delegates sent to Catalonia, while junior officers in Madrid and Barcelona prepared an ultimatum for the king requiring action against the Catalanists and the closure of the Cortes. The officers also formed commissions and demanded all crimes against the army, the nation, and the state to be tried by military tribunals. As had been the norm in the past, the government took no action against the aggressors. On the contrary, on 29 November it declared martial law in Barcelona, enforced the closure of newspapers, and arrested Catalanist sympathizers.<sup>64</sup> In March 1906, the bill for the “Repression of Crimes Against the Fatherland and the Army” (popularly known as the “Law of Jurisdictions”) was passed in Parliament. Although the new law retained offences against the nation and the state under civilian jurisdiction, it allowed military jurisdiction over verbal and written offences against the army and, therefore, showed the military that political violence and insubordination paid off in the short term.<sup>65</sup>

If the Law of Jurisdictions confirmed the military belief that the army was the only genuine guardian of the fatherland and made ‘official’ the military idea of Spain, the consequences in the long term proved to be disastrous. Republicans, the left-wing of the Liberal Party, Socialists and Carlists opposed the law and its repeal became central to the political debate. In Catalonia, *Solidaritat Catalana*, gathered Carlists, Republicans and Catalanists in a political alliance whose main goals were the abolition of the Law of Jurisdictions and the creation of Catalan regional institutions. The action-reaction spiral sparked off by the *Cu-cut* affair seems clear: the military gained even more control of the state apparatus and regionalism gained more social support.

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<sup>63</sup> Boyd, *Praetorian Politics*, 12.

<sup>64</sup> Balfour, *The End*, 179-181.

<sup>65</sup> The Law of Jurisdictions in *La Correspondencia Militar*, 21-3-1906.

The subsequent crises of Spanish society only widened the gap between the military and the popular classes. When in 1909 an anti-war demonstration sparked off the events of the 'Tragic Week' in Barcelona another episode of the action-reaction spiral was set in motion.<sup>66</sup> The working class challenge to the imperial adventure 'confirmed' to the military that leftist ideologies worked against 'national grandeur'. In turn, the brutal repression ordered by the Maura government and executed by the army logically amplified the bitterness and mistrust of the working class towards the military. During the period 1917-1920 this very same pattern was to be repeated on a regular basis. What began as a military revolt to defend the army's privileges in 1917 with the formation of the Juntas of junior officers ended up as harsh military repression of the working class, military control of public services and continual declarations of martial law in the following three years. Obviously, these actions only radicalised popular anti-militarism, while contributed to the strengthening of conservative military mentality. Moreover, after the "Disaster of Annual" (1921) and the abolition of the Juntas (1922), the army adopted a unified stand in the face of social tensions and peripheral nationalism, which was to crystallize in Primo's coup in September 1923.<sup>67</sup> It is hardly surprising that the day after the united demonstration of Catalan, Basque and Galician nationalists in Barcelona on September 11, 1923, the military press complained of the "separatist riffraff" and demanded the strict enforcement of the laws of crimes against the fatherland. "If impunity continued, good Spaniards should intervene to correct such grievances", the military threatened.<sup>68</sup> The following day, the Captain General of Catalonia, launched a coup. In his manifesto, Primo justified his action claiming the nation had to be saved from the "shameless separatist propaganda" and from the "impunity of communist propaganda". The military press unanimously welcomed the coup.<sup>69</sup>

The military nationalism that emerged at the turn of the century was an authoritarian ideology shaped by the confrontation with peripheral nationalists and the working class. Its main ideas, the creation of a strong, imperial and modern state, the

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<sup>66</sup> Joan Connelly Ullman, *The Tragic Week. A study of anticlericalism in Spain, 1875-1912* [Cambridge (Mass): 1968].

<sup>67</sup> Fernando Fernández Bastarreche, "The Spanish Military from the Age of Disasters to the Civil War", in *Armed Forces and Society in Spain*, 233.

<sup>68</sup> *El Ejército Español*, 12-9-1923.

<sup>69</sup> For Primo's manifesto and the response of the military press to the coup *El Ejército Español*, 14-9-1923; *Ejército y Armada* 14-9-1923; *Revista Hispano Africana*, September-October, 1923; *La Correspondencia Militar*, 14-9-1923.



concept of the nation as a unitary and sacred entity not subject to criticism, and the understanding of the armed forces as the interpreter of the national will, were not yet highly developed but would prove long-lasting. Military nationalism was to be the ideological driving force of the Military Directory and one of the main pillars in the creation of National Catholicism during the Civil Directory.

A third key element in the reformulation of Spanish nationalism during the first quarter of the twentieth century was the emergence and consolidation of a new radical Right. Either from inside the system, as in the case of Maurists, Social Catholics, and the monarchist leagues of Barcelona and Bilbao, or in direct opposition to the Restoration, as for the Traditionalists, these groups proposed diverse alternatives to the political structure in an attempt to 'regenerate' the nation from an authoritarian perspective. In doing so, they further developed the nineteenth century Conservative-Traditionalist canon of Spain and anticipated many of the ideas and rhetoric Primo's dictatorship would eventually adopt. Not surprisingly, most of the civilian political personnel of Primo's regime came from these authoritarian right groups. Furthermore, as the participation of the masses in the political system seemed to become inevitable if revolution was to be avoided, these groups represented the first real attempt from the Right to gain popular support outside the oligarchic circles of the Restoration. This new approach to the masses was based on a genuine effort to produce a social mobilisation - via political parties, Catholic trade unions, religious pilgrimages and civil militias - which paved the way for the model of 'national' mobilisation later tried under the *Unión Patriótica*.

To be sure, it was Maurism, the movement formed around the conservative leader, Antonio Maura, that represented the first real attempt to organize a modern political party and regenerate the country 'from above'. In a speech in parliament in 1899, Maura had already warned of the need to go through a "revolution from above", in order to avoid a revolution "made in the streets".<sup>70</sup> From then on, Maura's discourse would be one of national regeneration and active counterrevolution. Deeply influenced by the thoughts of his friend Charles Maurras, Maura's idea of Spain was based on the Conservative-Traditionalist canon, and monarchy and Catholicism were

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<sup>70</sup> Cited in Balfour, *The End*, 188.

much emphasized as the keystones of the nation.<sup>71</sup> Whether in government or in opposition, Maura proposed a program of local administrative reforms to undermine the power-base of the *caciques*, and the reconstruction of the Navy – this latter idea much in tune with the desire of the military and considered by the conservative leader as essential step to “rebuild [Spanish] nationality”.<sup>72</sup>

To avoid revolution from below, the Maurist movement took to the streets. The aim was to mobilize the so-called ‘neutral mass’, the ‘living forces’ of the nation, and to create an educated ‘citizenry’ to change the system from within. In other words, Maurism intended to attract the middle-classes hitherto not involved in the oligarchic system to transform the Restoration and ultimately combat revolution. Achieving these goals involved the creation of a modern propaganda machinery, the organization of mass rallies, the formation of a Maurist Youth and the creation of Maurist Centres all around Spain, something until then unknown to the monarchist parties. With a propaganda machine ready, a nationalist rhetoric, and a paternalistic approach to the ‘social question’, Maurism felt confident to fight the working class parties on their home ground. Since early 1915, Maurists opened ‘social centres’ in working class neighbourhoods to compete with Socialist, Anarchist and Republican popular houses. The aim was to ‘educate’ the lower-classes in patriotic, Catholic, corporative, and monarchist values and separate the proletariat from the left-wing parties.<sup>73</sup>

The fact that the first Spanish attempts to form fascist-type groups emerged around Maurists should not come as a surprise. Since the years of WWI, an important sector of Maurism, and particularly the Maurist Youth, was convinced that parliamentary politics had failed and advocated a strong government to save the nation. For many Maurists the only way to stop the left was physical confrontation, either via bourgeois militias or military-led repression. As early as March 1919, the

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<sup>71</sup> For the influence of Charles Maurras on Maura’s political thought see, Pedro González Cuevas, “La recepción del pensamiento maurrasiano en España (1914-1930)”, *Espacio, Tiempo y Forma*, serie V, (1990), n. 3, 354.

<sup>72</sup> On Maura and Maurism see María Jesús González Hernández, *Ciudadanía y acción. El conservadurismo maurista* [Madrid: 1990]; Javier Tusell and Juan Avilés, *La derecha española contemporánea* [Madrid: 1986]; Cristobal Robles, *Antonio Maura* [Madrid: 1995]. The quotation in Fusi, *España*, 240-241.

<sup>73</sup> González Hernández, *Ciudadanía*, 149-161.

Maurist daily *La Acción* had called for a military dictatorship.<sup>74</sup> When Mussolini reached power in Italy in October 1922, *La Acción* enthusiastically welcomed fascism as the solution to sweep away the political parties, and called Spaniards to follow the Italian example and form a national legion. A few months later in December 1922, the Maurist Joaquín Santos Ecay, the director of *La Acción*, Manuel Delgado Barreto, and the president of National Employers' Confederation, Tomás Benot, attempted to form the first fascist organization around the newspaper *La Camisa Negra*.<sup>75</sup> In the summer of 1923, another pro-fascist organization, *La Traza*, was founded by a group of army officers in Barcelona. The new party blamed politicians for the loss of the colonies, the Moroccan disaster of 1921, and the *caciques'* destruction of the "popular will" which was leading the fatherland to internal disintegration. In their foundational manifesto, *La Traza* called for a "sacred union of Spaniards", beyond their "monarchic or republican, aristocratic or democratic" ideas, to save the nation and proclaimed violence against the internal enemies of the fatherland was a valid option to redeem Spain.<sup>76</sup> Although the lives of both *La Camisa Negra* and *La Traza* were ephemeral, their appearance proves that the ground was fertile for the growth of authoritarian nationalist alternatives to the Restoration. If they did not develop further it was because the military dictatorship, an option much wanted by the Maurists, albeit not by Maura himself, was to integrate all these extreme-right groups into the regime.

The growth of Spanish nationalism can also be detected in the formation of new coalitions of the dynastic parties to confront peripheral nationalism. In Catalonia, the offensive was led by the former liberal Alfonso Sala, who founded *Unión Monárquica Nacional* (UMN) in 1919. The coalition of liberals and conservatives attracted some important members of Catalan high society aiming to "annul the work of the *Lliga Regionalista*".<sup>77</sup> This reaction of the monarchic parties was not accidental. The international recognition of the right of self determination of national minorities after WWI fuelled the emergence of more radical Catalanist opinions

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<sup>74</sup> A rhetoric that was only to increase from 1922 following Mussolini's seizure of power. Francisco Romero Salvadó, "The failure of the Liberal Project of the Spanish Nation-State, 1909-1923" in *Nationalism and the Nation in the Iberian Peninsula*, 130.

<sup>75</sup> Antonio Elorza, "Las variantes del fascismo (1931-1936)", in J. Antón and M. Caminal (eds.), *Pensamiento político en la España contemporánea* [Barcelona: 1992], 990.

<sup>76</sup> *La Traza* Manifesto in Eduardo González Calleja and Fernando del Rey, *La defensa armada contra la revolución* [Madrid: 1995], 326-327.

<sup>77</sup> González Cuevas, *Historia de las derechas*, 262.

which pushed for full 'home rule' (political autonomy).<sup>78</sup> In 1919, the moderate *Lliga* also launched a campaign to gain home rule for Catalonia. Against home rule, the UMN proposed monarchism, corporatism and regionalism –the latter understood in the Maurist sense of local and regional regeneration of the whole of Spain. In January 1919, conservatives, liberals, and Mauristas gathered in the Maurist Circle of Bilbao and formed the League of Monarchic Action (*Liga de Acción Monárquica*) to fight 'separatism'. In the same years, the Bilbao daily *El Pueblo Vasco* gathered an important number of intellectuals, who first formulated an ultra-nationalist notion of Spain. Among these writers and politicians were Ramiro de Maeztu, Victor Pradera, José Calvo Sotelo, Eduardo Aunós, Rafael Sánchez Mazas, and the Count of Rodezno.<sup>79</sup> All of them were later to collaborate, in one way or the other, with Primo de Rivera. Although neither peripheral nationalism nor the labour movement was as strong as in Catalonia, the logic behind the League of Monarchist Action was the same as in the National Monarchic Union: a dual defensive reaction of Spanish conservative nationalism to fight the challenges from below and the periphery. The immediate outcome was nothing but the consolidation of Spanish nationalism in Barcelona and Bilbao, with the monarchist parties increasing their votes in both cities.

While Maurism and the unions of dynastic parties were born in the big cities, another conservative movement proposing national regeneration that was to have a key influence in the ideological and political arrangement of Primo's dictatorship found its strength in the towns and villages of Old Castile and the northern provinces. Since the publication in 1891 of Leo XIII's *Rerum Novarum*, the interest of the Catholic hierarchy in the social situation of the lower classes had increased. The intense diffusion of social Catholic doctrines in the press, congresses, and collective pilgrimages was complemented in *fin-de-siècle* Spain with the opening of Catholic centres and, eventually, with the creation of Catholic trade unions in order to deal with the 'social question'.<sup>80</sup> As left-wing ideas spread throughout rural Spain, the Catholic Church launched a multiple-front offensive seeking a complete 're-clericalization of society'.<sup>81</sup>

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<sup>78</sup> Enric Ucelay da Cal, "The nationalisms of the periphery: Culture and Politics in the Construction of National Identity", in H. Graham and J. Labanyi (eds.), *Spanish Cultural Studies* [Oxford: 1995], 37.

<sup>79</sup> Fusi, "Centre", 38-39.

<sup>80</sup> Feliciano Montero, *El primer catolicismo social y la 'Rerum Novarum' en España* [Madrid: 1983].

<sup>81</sup> Carlos Serrano, "Crisis e ideología en la Restauración" in García Delgado (ed.), *España enre dos siglos (1875-1931)* [Madrid: 1991], 187.

This process of 're-clericalization of society' grew intensively first in 1898 and then in 1909, as a reaction to the anti-clericalism showed by the popular classes and liberal intellectuals after the loss of the colonies and during the 'Tragic Week'.<sup>82</sup> It was precisely in 1909 when the Jesuit Ángel Ayala tried to create an homogeneous Catholic movement, founding the National Catholic Association of Propagandists (*Asociación Católica Nacional de Propagandistas*, ACNP). Regarding the concept of Spain, the Propagandists' views were heavily indebted to the historic romanticism and Neo-Thomist thought that had framed the nineteenth-century Conservative-Traditionalist canon of Spain. Following the ideas of Cánovas and Menéndez Pelayo, Ángel Herrera, the Propagandists' leader, considered nations to be the work of God in History. In his view, Spain was a 'moral unity' historically framed by the Monarchy and the Church under providential supervision. Equally, Herrera considered liberal democracy not to suit Spain. First, because sovereignty was believed to lie ultimately in God, and, second, due to the fact that Spain's social and territorial disparities were thought to be too big for implementing a real universal suffrage without dangers. As an alternative, the Propagandists defended an "organic democracy" based on the family, municipalities and corporations that would eventually rejuvenate "the people's sap".<sup>83</sup>

From the beginning, the ACNP realised the importance of propaganda to obtain Catholics' social and doctrinal cohesion. The famous 'Propaganda Campaigns' orchestrated by the ACNP mouthpiece, *El Debate*, sought to indoctrinate and mobilise followers in a militant social Catholicism in an unprecedented manner. In addition, Social Catholics created trade unions and Centres of Social Defence to compete with the Left, yet with very limited success.<sup>84</sup> In fact, it was in the rural areas of Old Castile, Navarre, and Aragon where Catholic propaganda paid off. The diverse agrarian unions created during the first years of World War I finally came together in 1917 and formed the National Catholic Agrarian Confederation (*Confederación Nacional Católica Agraria*, CNCA). A genuine interclass organisation, the CNCA

<sup>82</sup> Manuel Revuelta González, "La recuperación eclesiástica y el rechazo anticlerical", in *España entre dos siglos*, 213.

<sup>83</sup> Pedro González Cuevas, *Acción Española. Teología Política y Nacionalismo Autoritario (1913-1936)* [Madrid: 1998], 47-48.

<sup>84</sup> Domingo Benavides, *Democracia y cristianismo en la España de la Restauración, 1875-1931* [Madrid: 1978]; Juan José Castillo, *El sindicalismo amarillo en España* [Madrid: 1977]; Andrés Gallego, *Pensamiento y acción social de la Iglesia en España* [Madrid: 1983].

was made up of smallholders and directed by big landowners.<sup>85</sup> It was no coincidence that one of the first groups to promote the creation of the *primorriverista* Unión Patriótica in 1924 emerged from this social basis of Castilian militant Catholics.

Changes also occurred in those reactionary groups that openly opposed the Restoration political establishment. After 1898, the complex world of the Traditionalists (Carlists and Catholic Integrist) was to retain its customary influence in areas of Navarre, the Basque Country and Catalonia.<sup>86</sup> However, political unity amongst these groups was never achieved during the Restoration. Quite the contrary, in 1919 a major split in the Carlists ranks occurred, when the main ideologue of the party, Juan Vázquez de Mella, walked out to form the Traditionalist Party. Despite the schism, or perhaps because of it, thinkers such as Vázquez de Mella, Salvador Minguijón and Victor Pradera attempted to revitalise Traditionalist doctrine during the first decades of the twentieth century. Always within the narrow margins of integrist thought, they incorporated ideas from thinkers outside Spanish Traditionalism such as Charles Maurras and Joaquín Costa. This new Traditionalism focused on social questions in an attempt to gain mass political support and simultaneously sought to attract the most conservative political and ecclesiastical forces of the Alfonsine regime.<sup>87</sup> Thus Traditionalists intensified their propaganda campaigns, participated in mass pilgrimages and even opened social centres for workers in Barcelona and Bilbao.<sup>88</sup>

At the turn of the century, Traditionalists accentuated the patriotic tones of their political discourse in response to the emergence of Basque nationalism and Catalan regionalism. These movements competed with Traditionalism for the same political market and seriously damaged Carlist popular support in two of its key areas.<sup>89</sup> As mentioned above, Traditionalists fiercely defended the *fueros* and proposed a decentralized Spain based on medieval laws. However, it is also important to notice that this Habsburg conception of the nation, for all its emphasis on regional liberties, did not preclude an imperial idea of Spain in the Traditionalist discourse. After all, the Traditionalists argued, it had been during the sixteenth century when

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<sup>85</sup> Juan José Castillo, *Propietarios muy pobres: sobre la subordinación política del pequeño campesinado* [Madrid: 1979].

<sup>86</sup> Benavides, *Democracia y cristianismo*, 143.

<sup>87</sup> Juan Ramón Andrés Martín, *El cisma mellista* [Madrid, 2000], 25.

<sup>88</sup> Montero, *El primer catolicismo*, 120-121; Colin Winston, "Carlist Worker Groups in Catalonia, 1900-1923", in S. Payne (ed.), *El Carlismo, 1833-1975* [Madrid: 1996], 85-101.

<sup>89</sup> Martin Blinkhorn, *Carlism and Crisis in Spain, 1931-1939* [Cambridge: 1975], 33-35

Spain had created her world empire and maintained an internal division of kingdoms at the same time. Since the 1890s, all Traditionalist factions ardently supported the Spanish struggle in the colonies and, when war with the USA was looming in early 1898 the Carlist pretender, Carlos VII, declared his loyalty to the “sacred traditions of the Spanish army”.<sup>90</sup> The military humiliation was no discouragement for the Traditionalists. Just three months after the defeats in Cavite and Santiago, the Integrist daily, *El Siglo Futuro*, demanded the creation of a new Spanish colony in Morocco.<sup>91</sup> Soon after the intervention in Northern Africa was accomplished, Vázquez de Mella required in 1911 the revocation of the international agreements with France and Great Britain in order to strengthen the Spanish position in the protectorate. According to this logic, if Spain was to have a “moral empire” over the Hispanic American countries as Mella wished, she needed a more powerful expansion in Morocco.<sup>92</sup> Territorial gains were thus linked to ‘spiritual expansion’ in the imperial destiny Traditionalists foresaw for Spain. Finally, the beginning of the First World War did nothing to placate Mella’s imperial desires. In his book *El ideal de España*, Mella explicitly declared himself imperialist and insisted in the need to claim Spanish total sovereignty over the Straits of Gibraltar, the federation with Portugal, (the Spain *irredenta*) and a loose union with the Spanish American republics which would contemplate a common foreign policy under Spanish direction.<sup>93</sup>

This Pan-Hispanismo, which Mella confessed should imitate aggressive Pan-Germanism, was not without roots in the Spanish Right. *Hispanismo*, the belief that Spaniards and Spanish Americans are members of the of the same ‘race’, had been an essential element in the discourse of Spanish politicians since the late nineteenth century.<sup>94</sup> Both the Right and the Left had used the idea of a transatlantic spiritual community as an external projection of the Spanish nation. On the Right, Menéndez Pelayo had framed the intellectual bases of Hispanismo during the 1890s stressing the Catholic, linguistic, and cultural ties between Spain and its former colonies.<sup>95</sup> After the loss of Cuba and Puerto Rico, this conservative Hispanismo gained a new impulse

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<sup>90</sup> Vilar, “Nación y Estado”, 14.

<sup>91</sup> *El Siglo Futuro*, 4-11-1898 and 5-11-1898

<sup>92</sup> Andrés, *El cisma*, 58.

<sup>93</sup> Juan Vázquez de Mella, *El ideal de España* [Madrid: 1915], 73-75, 85-95.

<sup>94</sup> This concept of race was a cultural one. Race is understood here as being shaped more by common culture, historical experiences, tradition and language, than by blood. Fredrick Pike *Hispanismo, 1898-1936* [Notre Dame: 1971], 1-2.

<sup>95</sup> *Ibid.*, 39-41.

and a wider audience with the writings of Julián Juderías and José María Salaverría, who emphasised the Spanish concept of mission in America. The most popular work of these writers was Juderías' *La Leyenda Negra*, a book acclaimed by both press and public. A disciple of Menéndez Pelayo, Juderías denounced foreign powers for inventing the 'Black Legend' to diminish Spanish influence in the world and complained of the good reception this interpretation of history had had amongst Spaniards themselves.<sup>96</sup>

This new drive towards conservative *Hispanismo* has to be understood, first of all, as an optimistic nationalist response against the pessimism that invaded regenerationist writers after 1898. A good example of this patriotic optimism can be found in the writings of Salaverría, which angrily attacked the negative image of Spain portrayed by the artists of the Generation of 1898 and those foreigners that had invented the Black Legend.<sup>97</sup> To overcome this "masochism" that in Salaverría's view many Spaniards were suffering, the Basque journalist proposed the creation of "a new Spaniard" proud of the nation's imperial history, advocated a rapprochement with the Spanish American countries and supported the occupation of the Rif.<sup>98</sup> Secondly, the imperial rhetoric and the promotion of *Hispanismo* has to be considered as reaction to peripheral nationalism. Conservative newspapers like *ABC*, *El Debate*, and *La Vanguardia* developed a deep anti-peripheral nationalist discourse in which the imperial past played the positive pole versus the 'mutilated' Spain wanted by Catalan and Basque nationalists.<sup>99</sup> The more peripheral nationalism grew at the beginning of the twentieth century, the more Spanish nationalism found in *Hispanismo* the sense of unity of the Spanish race, which implied the negation of Catalan and Basque nationalists' claims.<sup>100</sup>

There can be no doubt that in the 25 years that followed the 'Disaster' of 1898, a new authoritarian Right emerged in the political arena turning nationalism into a key

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<sup>96</sup> Juderías defined the Black Legend as "the legend of the inquisitorial, ignorant and fanatic Spain, a nation unable to stand among the cultured ones, today as in the past, always ready for violent repressions; enemy of progress and innovations; or, in other words, the legend that began to spread in the sixteenth century, with the Reformation, and has not stopped to be used against us since, especially in critical moments of our national life". Julián Juderías, *La leyenda negra. Estudios acerca del concepto de España en el extranjero* [Salamanca: 1997, 1<sup>st</sup> ed. 1914], 24.

<sup>97</sup> José María Salaverría, *La afirmación española: Estudios sobre el pesimismo español y los nuevos tiempos* [Barcelona: 1917], 14-19, 30-41, 48-49.

<sup>98</sup> *Ibid.*, 21, 123-132, 136-37. See also his articles in *ABC*, 20-8-1914; 18-10-1917; 15-8-1922.

<sup>99</sup> Salaverría, *La afirmación*, 52-57, 62, 65, 81-92 and *ABC*, 7-10-1916; 28-8-1923.

<sup>100</sup> Isidro Sepúlveda Muñoz, "Nacionalismo Español y proyección americana: el pan-hispanismo", in *Nationalism in Europe*, 317-336.



element of its discourse and modernising the political attitudes of the conservatives. In this process, the Conservative-Traditionalist canon of Spain continued to develop. It invigorated its Catholic, imperial, corporative, and anti-democratic character and incorporated new features such as radical militarism and anti-peripheral nationalism. As in other European countries, the new Right showed a genuine will to gain mass support but in Spain, despite all its organisational and propagandist efforts, it failed both to reform the Restoration system and to attract great popular backing. By 1923 the authoritarian route of the military dictatorship was welcomed by all the new Right groups. They hoped the army would impose on the masses their authoritarian view of Spain and implement their political agendas. It was something of an acknowledgement of their own failure to rally mass support.

### **The intensification of the nationalisation of the masses**

The emergence of the new Right and the incorporation of nationalism as one way of coping politically with mass mobilisation was the reflection of a changing society. During the first two decades of the twentieth century social and economic transformations accelerated and the state was partially modernised. These changes were to have a direct impact on the process of mass nationalisation from the state, to the extent that some historians consider that during this period the complete nationalisation of the Spanish political and cultural life was accomplished.<sup>101</sup> In other words, these were the years when the nation, and not the region or the town, became dominant in the field of social and political preoccupations.

To begin with, the loss of the colonies had the effect of increasing the integration of the national market. Catalan textile industry lost its profitable market in Cuba and soon sought to gain new customers inside Spain. The political pressures of the Catalan bourgeoisie in Madrid proved fruitful and Spain significantly raised its already high tariffs to protect its products, which in turn led to the growth of the national markets. Secondly, during the two decades that followed 1898, the system of national education developed, urbanization proceeded and the transport system was enlarged, increasing the mobility of the population within Spain. On top of this, illiteracy was severely reduced, albeit it still remained high on western European standards, and

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<sup>101</sup> Fusi, "Los nacionalismos y el Estado español: el siglo XX", *Cuadernos de Historia Contemporánea* (2000), n. 22, 21-52.

mass press expanded creating a national market and invigorating the idea of an imagined national community.<sup>102</sup>

Some of the state institutions also improved their performance as agents in the process of nation-building. Newly regulated, the public administration grew important in the first two decades of the twentieth century, and state officers, such as magistrates and functionaries, became more predominant in provincial towns and villages. More to the point, the liberal state attempted to develop a real national education system, which would include the entire population. Led by proposals of educational and social regeneration, the Ministry of Public Instruction was created in 1900, and diverse official institutions, such as the *Escuela de Estudios Superiores de Magisterio* (1909), the *Centro de Estudios Históricos* (1910), the *Instituto-Escuela* (1918), followed. In addition, a massive corpus of legislation regulated state educational intervention, which led to serious improvements, especially in primary education, and confirmed public instruction as the agent of controlled social modernization.<sup>103</sup>

This state intervention has to be understood not only as an attempt to improve the appalling illiteracy rates, but as a conscious means of nationalising the masses in patriotic and bourgeois values. As a Royal Decree plainly put it in October 1911, the curricula for adult education sought to put “even more emphasis [than in primary education] in the formation of Fatherland loving citizens [...] respectful of the Law, Property, and other citizens”.<sup>104</sup> It is worth observing here that in this role of educational nationalisation, both Conservative and Liberal governments played a key part. For all their rhetoric on the right of the Church to educate without state interference, the Conservatives under Maura promoted the role of state-controlled education and imposed compulsory universal primary schooling in 1909.<sup>105</sup> Moreover, they were fully aware of the need to “produce” a new patriotic youth that would “place love for the Fatherland beyond all interest and conveniences”.<sup>106</sup> To achieve a complete “national pedagogy”, the Maurist minister of education César Silió argued, it was necessary to fight all those “humanitarian, pacifist, anti-militarist,

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<sup>102</sup> Fusi, *España*, 238.

<sup>103</sup> Alfonso Capitán Díaz, *Historia de la Educación en España* [Madrid: 1994], vol. 2, 385-392

<sup>104</sup> *Ibid.*, 394-395.

<sup>105</sup> Manuel de Puelles Benítez, *Educación e ideología en la España contemporánea* [Madrid: 1999], 224.

<sup>106</sup> César Silió, *La educación nacional* [Madrid: 1914], 224-225.

and anti-patriotic” doctrines taught in schools. He claimed these ideas were merely a “hypocritical cover” of the Left that sought to “destroy those armed organizations that impeded the triumph of revolution”.<sup>107</sup> Once again, nationalisation went hand in hand with counterrevolution. No wonder that during Maurist rule several governmental initiatives aimed to transmit nationalist values. In 1921, for instance, Silió promoted a Royal Decree creating a patriotic prize awarded to the children’s book that most inspired love for the nation. And three weeks later, a Royal Decree stated that there must be a portrait of the king, “as the head of the power that represented the unity of the Fatherland”, in a visible place in all public schools.<sup>108</sup>

With regard to those new institutions, the *Centro de Estudios Históricos* (Centre for Historical Studies) was doubtless the keystone in the formation of an official academic ‘national’ history and culture. Founded to modernise Spanish culture by introducing European standards into historical research, the Centre for Historical Studies gathered together most of the liberal intelligentsia, which, in the search of Spanish national identity’s historical formation, emphasised the leading role of Castile and the Castilian language.<sup>109</sup> More importantly, the Centre took good care of the propagation of this historical and cultural ‘national legacy’. Together with the hundreds of teachers, journalists, and even politicians educated at the Centre, the official institution created journals for a non-specialised audience, as the *Revista de Filología Española*, and published the popular book collection of *Clásicos Castellanos* to transmit to the wider public its perception of the national culture.<sup>110</sup>

However, not all state agencies were to improve their role in the process of social nationalisation. The army proved unable to be a competent agency in the first decades of the twentieth century. As shown above, the mounting military intervention in politics and the steady use of the army in social repression did nothing but increase popular anti-militarism through the period 1898-1923. Neither did the continuity of the unfair conscription system make matters better. In spite of the legislation reducing monetary redemptions introduced by Prime Minister Eduardo Dato in 1911, the system remained basically unchanged until 1921, and so did the understandable alienation of the popular classes from the army. Furthermore, in the countryside, the

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<sup>107</sup> *Ibid.*, 181-182.

<sup>108</sup> Royal Decree (hereafter RD) 9-9-1921 and Royal Order (hereafter RO), 4-10-1921, in Del Pozo and Braster, “The Rebirth”, 82, 89.

<sup>109</sup> Boyd, *Historia*, 147-149.

lower-classes' contempt for the armed forces was emphasised by the actions of the Civil Guard, a militarised force created to defend proprietors' interests in rural areas.<sup>111</sup>

At the political level, the dynastic parties did little to generate a cohesive national identity. For all the rhetoric of 'revolution from above' and national regeneration that followed the 'Disaster', electoral falsification and patronage continued to be the rule, hence hampering popular identification with the political system. Moreover, as economy and society modernised, the system proved too rigid to absorb political opposition.<sup>112</sup> The best alternative that the Restoration politicians found to confront political challenges was to increase the already intense military intervention in socio-political repression, which in turn led to a higher popular alienation from the political system. And one should not forget that the steady growth of socialist and anarchist proletariat, republican-leaning middle classes and Catalan regionalists meant not only an increasing challenge to the political system but also the social expansion of alternative identities to the official idea of Spain.

Yet the dynastic parties seem to have realised the importance of the symbolic order in the formation of popular national identity. During the decades that preceded Primo's dictatorship, the creation of national symbols was completed. It was then that Maura governments promoted the "Marcha Real" to the rank of national anthem (1908) and the national flag was made compulsory in every public building (1908). Again under Maura in 1918, October the 12<sup>th</sup>, the 'Day of the Race' (*Día de la Raza*) was officially declared a national holiday in commemoration of the 'Discovery of America' by Columbus. The 'Day of the Race' had been previously celebrated since 1892 and in the years before WWI some Latin American countries also began to commemorate the 'Discovery' on the other side of the Atlantic. However, in 1918, the promotion of the 'Day of the Race' to the rank of official national holiday has to be understood not only as a step further in the endorsement of *Hispanismo* by the state, but also as the attempt to promote political patriotism and nationalist exaltation in the context of a serious institutional crisis in Spain.<sup>113</sup> In other words, stirring nationalist

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<sup>110</sup> Fox, *La invención*, 97-104.

<sup>111</sup> Nuñez Seixas, *Los nacionalismos*, 24-25.

<sup>112</sup> Romero Salvadó, "The failure", 119-121.

<sup>113</sup> Serrano, *El nacimiento*, 318-321.

feelings among the population was thought to be the internal panacea for a seriously sick political system.

As in France and Germany, the ‘monumentalist fever’ of the 1880s and 1890s was to rise from the turn of century onwards.<sup>114</sup> It was then that a group of artists connected to the Royal Academy of San Fernando built the monuments celebrating the nation’s dead heroes, and the Crown as the symbolic personification of the fatherland, best examples of which were the sculpture of Eloy Gonzalo García, the ‘hero of Cascorro’ (Madrid, 1902), and the monumental complex to Alfonso XII, in El Retiro park (Madrid, 1902). By an official directive, the same artists were active in the provinces, where all sorts of ‘national’ fighters were commemorated, from the Celtiiberian resistance against the Romans (Numancia, 1905), through the sixteenth-century imperial commander-in-chief El Gran Capitán (Córdoba, 1909), to the heroine of the ‘War of Independence’ Agustina de Aragón (Zaragoza, 1908). All of them were manifestations of the process of creating from above a historical national identity that was gaining momentum precisely after the loss of the last colonies. These monuments, together with the ever-increasing construction of ‘national’ museums, libraries, theatres, and archives, created ‘sacred places’ in which the national history and culture were venerated. After the turn of the century, the whole process of ‘inventing traditions’ was set in full motion in Spain. By 1923, an official image of the nation, as perceived by the state-elites, had been consolidated.<sup>115</sup>

It is worth noticing here that the creation of a national ‘civic religion’ from above, with its symbols, holidays, and shrines, often emerged with associations to Catholic symbols, rites and traditions. As mentioned above, Catholicism was a pivotal element in the conservative-traditionalist canon of the nation and even the moderate liberals maintained a strong identification between Catholicism and Spanish national identity. The 1876 Constitution declared Catholicism the official religion of Spain and Cánovas soon accommodated the Church within the Restoration establishment, which meant ecclesiastical representation in almost every single public event. Thus it was no coincidence that one of the most notorious public ceremonies during the reign of

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<sup>114</sup> Carlos Reyero, *La escultura conmemorativa en España. La edad de oro del monumento público, 1820-1914* [Madrid: 1999]. For the French case see Pierre Nora (ed.), *Les lieux de mémoire*, 3 vols. [Paris: 1984-1992]. For Germany see Rudy Koshar, *From Monuments to Traces. Artifacts of German Memory, 1870-1990* [Berkeley: 2000].

<sup>115</sup> Álvarez Junco, “El nacionalismo español: las insuficiencias estatales”, 50.

Alfonso the XIII was the king's consecration of the patria to the *Sagrado Corazón de Jesús*, in the opening of a huge monument devoted to its cult in El Cerro de los Ángeles (Madrid, 1902).<sup>116</sup> Neither was it by chance that some memorials commemorating the 'War of Independence' were considered monuments "to the martyrs of Religion and the Fatherland" at the same time, such as the one inaugurated in Zaragoza in 1904.<sup>117</sup> This overlapping of the national and Catholic symbolism became even more obvious with the creation of the *Fiesta de la Raza*, for October the 12<sup>th</sup> coincided with the popular religious celebration of the Virgin Pilar, which had already gained a strong nationalist flavour throughout the nineteenth century. The establishment of the Restoration seems to have realised that representing and celebrating the nation intermingled with religion in a country overwhelmingly Catholic was a good way to obtain popular support for the official patriotic ideal, without having to pay the toll of a real democratisation of the political system.

On the other hand, the Church also realised the utility of embracing the myth of the nation and saw how it could be brought into play to ensure Catholic social mobilisation. Thus Leo XIII and the Spanish Church supported from its inception the celebration of the 'Day of the Race', which they interpreted as the remembrance of the successful Christianisation of America.<sup>118</sup> Another example of interwoven Catholic and nationalist sentiments were the popular pilgrimages to Rome, where the participants combined appeals to Catholic unity with prayers for the "salvation of Spain".<sup>119</sup> After all in the last quarter of the nineteenth century Catholic schools, congresses and associations under ecclesiastical control had been stressing imperial Spanish history as the hallmarks of national grandeur, following the works of Merri y Colom and Menéndez Pelayo.<sup>120</sup> This endeavour of popular indoctrination ultimately proves the Church found no contradiction in promoting simultaneously nationalist and Christian doctrines. In this sense, the process of 're-clericalization' of Spanish society carried out by the Church in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was equivalent to the nationalisation of Spaniards.

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<sup>116</sup> *Ibid.*, 48.

<sup>117</sup> Serrano, *El nacimiento*, 199.

<sup>118</sup> Del Pozo and Braster, "The Rebirth", 85.

<sup>119</sup> López Cerdón, "La mentalidad", 92.

<sup>120</sup> *Ibid.*, 81-91.

## CONCLUSION: A NEW SPANISH NATIONALISM IN A STATE OF SIEGE

The two decades that followed the 'Disaster' of 1898 definitively changed Spanish nationalism in terms of discourse and social scope. Ideologically, both the Conservative-Traditionalist and the Liberal-Democratic canons were reformulated. The former became increasingly martial, clerical, Pan-Hispanic and anti-liberal, and developed a deep hostility towards peripheral nationalism and the organised working class. Political parties, intellectuals, the armed forces, conservative newspapers, and a plethora of organisations generally related to the Church constructed a new Spanish nationalism in a siege situation. The fact that these groups were unable to come together into a single party should not lead us to assume the absence of a Spanish political nationalism in the years that preceded Primo's dictatorship. Indeed, most of the ideas that would eventually constitute the official ultra-nationalist discourse of the *primorriverista* regime were first formulated during the last years of the Restoration.

The endurance and centrality of Catholicism as a key factor in the Conservative-Traditionalist concept of nation and an element of social and political mobilisation during the nineteenth and twentieth century debunks the assumption that Catholicism was a handicap for the development of a modern nationalism.<sup>121</sup> As explained, all the groups of the new nationalist Right emphasised Catholicism as the constituent element of Spanish nationality and gained popular support in those rural areas in which the social influence of the Church was stronger. Furthermore, in the process of mass nationalisation the state overlapped civic and religious symbols, holidays, and ceremonies to create collective memories and loyalties, with the active collaboration of a Catholic Church integrated into the establishment. Catholicism, far from being incompatible with the development of a modern nationalism, was rather an appropriate ideological, discursive and symbolic element for the creation of a national identity and the mobilisation of social support.

In the field of nation-building, the first decades of the twentieth century signalled an important development in the political nationalisation of Spain. Socio-economic transformations and a partial modernisation of the state were essential in the process of mass nationalisation, in which Spain began to catch up with other European

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<sup>121</sup> For the thesis of Catholicism as an exclusive mutual identity that hampered to develop a modern nationalism in Spain see Payne, *Fascism in Spain*, 14.

countries. It was somehow too late. At the turn of the century alternative national and class identities were already challenging the official idea of Spain. Hence, the more repressive and counterrevolutionary the establishment became in the following years, the less attached the popular classes and peripheral regionalists felt towards the nation-state. The gap between the 'official' and the 'real' Spain was at its greatest when the Restoration finally collapsed in September 1923.

The dictatorship of Primo de Rivera inaugurated a new chapter in the development of Spanish nationalism. The heady ideological legacy of the regenerationists, military nationalism, and the new Right was then used to formulate a National-Catholic discourse that openly challenged the liberal canon of Spain. Imposing this new canon on the masses required the modernisation of state, so the perceived nationalising deficiencies of the past could be rectified. Doctrinal elaboration and the creation of a new state were to go hand in hand in the *primorriverista* 'regeneration' of Spain.



## CHAPTER 2. THE MILITARY DIRECTORY (1923-1925). THE MAKING OF THE PRIMORRIVERISTA DISCOURSE

“...our greatest eagerness is that the Spanish sentiment crystallises in Catalonia for its own good” (Primo de Rivera)<sup>1</sup>

### INTRODUCTION. TOWARDS THE MONOPOLISATION OF THE POLITICAL DISCOURSE

This chapter analyses the *primorriverista* discourse and the nationalist policies implemented by the government during the Military Directory. It argues that during his first two years in power Primo de Rivera delivered an official discourse interweaving ideas from four of the main nationalist movements that had emerged after 1898, namely military nationalism, regenerationism, Social Catholicism and Maurism. The dictatorship set off a process of ideological amalgamation of the main nationalist currents of the Right, in which secular and religious myths were integrated to form a sacred concept of Spain. By the end of 1925, the bases of National Catholicism had been laid down and the first steps towards the creation of a political religion taken.

The following pages trace the different ideological influences incorporated into the discourse of the regime and how these beliefs were transformed to construct a new political message and implement nationalist legislation by the Military Directory. Secondly, the chapter analyses the discourse focusing on the scientific and religious language used by Primo and its strategic functions, that is, the social functions of the discourse. The approach chosen here combines a classical historical analysis of the nature and development of political ideas with the analytical frame of current discourse analysis studies. Following the thesis developed by the Vienna School of Discourse Analysis, it is assumed here that “national identities, as special

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<sup>1</sup> Cited in Manuel Rubio Cabeza, *Crónica de la Dictadura* [Barcelona: 1974], 126.

forms of social identities, are produced and reproduced as well as transformed and dismantled, *discursively*".<sup>2</sup>

Methodologically this approach distinguishes between two closely interwoven dimensions: contents and strategies. Contents refer to the topics most frequently addressed by Primo's discourse. Here it is possible to differentiate between those related to the concept of nation, the idea of regeneration, the attacks against peripheral nationalisms and the reforms in the state structure. Strategies correspond to the main social functions of the discourse, that is, the socio-political goals pursued with the official discourse. According to Wodak, the social functions of the discourse are those contributing "to the restoration, legitimation or relativisation of a social status quo". In view of these social functions, it is possible to differentiate "between constructive, perpetuating and/or justifying discursive strategies as well as strategies of transformation and dismantlement or disparagement".<sup>3</sup> In the case of the Military Directory one can see all three strategies in the official discourse. First, strategies of justification are to be found in the steady defence of the military coup and the illegal (on constitutional grounds) regime established by Primo. Second, a strategy of transformation underlies the regime's attempt to destroy the liberal political classes and to reform the state structures, most notably with the promulgation of the Municipal and Provincial Statutes. Third, constructive strategies can be detected in the formation of a new political party by the government, the *Unión Patriótica*, and the extension of the *Somatén* to the whole country.

This approach to the official discourse allows us to inquire not only into the nature of the Military Directory's political ideas but also into the dictatorship's socio-political goals, the audience the regime sought to reach, and the reciprocal relationship between discursive and political action. The chapter is divided into four parts according to the four main contents of Primo's discourse. The first section discusses the meaning of patria in the *primorriverista* discourse and its association with the secular myths of the 'Iron Surgeon', 'national regeneration' and 'citizenship'. The second part deals with the sacred connotations of the idea of Spain and its representation in public ceremonies. A third section addresses the measures taken to reform the state structure during the Military Directory. The chapter concludes with

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<sup>2</sup> Ruth Wodak, Rudolf de Cillia, Martin Reisigl and Karin Liebhart, *The Discursive Construction of National Identity* [Edinburgh: 1999], 3-4.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 8, 30.

an analysis of the dictator's strategy to combat peripheral nationalism, focusing on the policies of nationalisation implemented by the regime. First of all, a brief view of the official propaganda machine will help us to contextualise the dimensions in where the *primorriverista* message operated.

Since the very first moment Primo seized power, the dictator was fully aware of the need to maintain a steady communication with public opinion. If the regime was to survive without a parliament it would need some sort of support from the masses. This backing was sought via political propaganda and popular mobilisation following the Italian example.<sup>4</sup> In the field of propaganda, Primo initially sought to transmit his ideas and governing plans through 'official notes' (*notas oficiosas*), press conferences and articles he wrote for friendly newspapers. Given as often as twice per week, these press communiqués were declared of mandatory inclusion in all newspapers and represented the monologue that the dictator would maintain with the public for the entire dictatorship.

As the regime was consolidated and Primo made it clear that he was in power to stay, the propaganda machinery improved. Primo's speeches and notes were collected in diverse books and leaflets, the *Oficina de Información y Censura* was created to co-ordinate the regime line information both in Spain and abroad, and the government paid foreign newspapers to ensure international press gave a positive impression of the dictatorship.<sup>5</sup> More importantly, the government showed itself especially keen in using state resources to promote the official message and seized control of over 60

<sup>4</sup> Rosa Martínez Segarra, "La Unión Patriótica", in Javier Tusell, Feliciano Montero, José María Marín (eds.), *Las derechas en la España contemporánea*, [Madrid: 1997], 169.

<sup>5</sup> Among the collections of Primo's discourses and notes see, *España: Honor, Patria, Justicia* (prologue by Benito Mussolini) [Madrid: 1923]; *Discursos del Excmo. Sr. D. Francisco Bergamín, Presidente de la Academia [de Jurisprudencia] sobre Tribunales de Comercio, y del Excmo. Sr. D. Miguel Primo de Rivera* [Madrid: 1924]; *Discurso leído por el Excmo. Señor D. Miguel Primo de Rivera y Obraneja en la Solemne Apertura de los Tribunales* [Madrid: 1924]; Marqués de Casa Ramos, *Dos años de Directorio Militar* [Madrid: 1925?]; *Disertación ciudadana. Destinada a mantener la comunicación entre el gobierno y los ciudadanos sobre algunos aspectos de la vida pública* [Madrid: no date]; *Actuación ciudadana que corresponde al ejército* [Madrid: 1927]; *Del General Primo de Rivera: documentos originales y artículos inspirados por él* [Madrid: 1928]; *El pensamiento de Primo de Rivera. Sus notas, artículos y discursos* [Madrid: 1929]; *Curso de ciudadanía* [Madrid: 1929]; *Mirando al futuro* [Madrid: 1929]. Among the *primorriverista* works published for propaganda abroad were José Calvo Sotelo, *L'autonomie Municipale, enquête au sujet des relations entre le pouvoir central et les pouvoirs locaux* [Madrid: 1925]; Miguel Primo de Rivera, *Dissertation Civique ou Catéchisme du Citoyen* [Tours: 1926]; José Pemartín Sanjuan, *Le général Primo de Rivera et la dictature en Espagne* [Brussels: 1929]. For Primo acknowledging that the Spanish government paid money to the foreign press "to look after [Spain's] interests and good name" see Dionisio Pérez, *La Dictadura a través de sus notas oficiosas* [Barcelona: 1930], 317. For the regime's propaganda machine abroad see Rosa Cal, "La agencia *Plus Ultra*: un instrumento de propaganda de Primo de Rivera", *Mélanges de la Casa de Valázquez*, 1995, XXXI (3), 177-195.

regional newspapers. On 19 October 1925, the regime's daily mouthpiece, *La Nación*, was launched after a huge subscription campaign conducted by the civil governors in all the provinces and orchestrated by the Minister of the Interior (*Subsecretario de Gobernación*), General Martínez Anido.<sup>6</sup> The journalist chosen by Primo to direct the newspaper was Manuel Delgado Barreto, former editor of the Maurist daily *La Acción*, the first man in charge of the Censorship Cabinet created by the dictatorship and one of the most virulent enemies of the parliamentary system in Spain. The following year, the journal of the regime's political party, *Unión Patriótica*, made its first appearance as a bi-monthly publication. Both publications soon claimed to have a circulation of 55,000 and 15,000 copies respectively.<sup>7</sup>

If the regime was anxious to provide itself with a propaganda apparatus hitherto unseen in Spain, Primo showed himself even more zealous when it came to silencing potential political critics. After the coup, the Military Directory made an extraordinary effort to preclude any sort of criticism from the press or, in fact, elsewhere. Martial law was declared in the whole country and was in force for eighteenth months. High ranking military officers replaced all civil governors and were instructed to punish "with the most severe measures" all those questioning the directory "in the press or in conversations".<sup>8</sup> Fully aware of the formative political role of the press, Primo declared that the freedom of speech was a decadent right and that the media had to be controlled to avoid the people getting "harmful ideas".<sup>9</sup> In his view, the role of the media had to be the promotion of patriotic ideas, and any newspaper publishing otherwise should be banned.<sup>10</sup>

With the 1876 Constitution in suspension since 13 September 1923, the dictator established a prior censorship for all publications and, from January 1924 on, the Directory implemented a telephone and telegraphic censorship.<sup>11</sup> The novelty of this censorship was its unprecedented scope and duration. Censorship had been often imposed during the Restoration whenever the government declared a state of war, but

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<sup>6</sup> For the campaign directed by Martínez Anido see, for instance, Civil Governor of Alicante to Subsecretario de Gobernación, 23-11-1925; Civil Governor of Barcelona to Subsecretario de Gobernación, 23-11-1925, AGA, Gobernación Serie A, Bundle 18, Folder 4. The whole folder 4 is full of reports from the civil governors to Martínez Anido on the promotion of subscriptions for *La Nación*.

<sup>7</sup> Gómez-Navarro, "Unión Patriótica", 156.

<sup>8</sup> For the instructions from the Minister of Interior see General Martínez Anido to civil governors, 10-10-1923 and Martínez Anido to civil governors, 23-10-1923, AHN, Gobernación Serie A, Bundle 18 A.

<sup>9</sup> Primo de Rivera, *El pensamiento*, 166-171.

<sup>10</sup> Primo de Rivera, *Disertación*, 7-9.

with Primo it reached a permanent status. The dictator personally created a censorship cabinet with the specific aim of banning “every single rebel and opposition manifestation”.<sup>12</sup> Strongly centralized and responsible only to Primo, the cabinet was endowed with exceptional powers. It could cut paragraphs from articles, introduce official comments and corrections in editorials, ban entire pieces, impose economic sanctions, and even close down publications. It had authority over all public manifestations, including those made by the king and the dictator himself. The censorship cabinet also functioned as a press office, reviewing Primo’s official notes before they were handed to the press and advising the President of the directory on how to publicise political issues.

Censorship became the negative complement of the propaganda machine. Extended throughout the whole country and indiscriminately used by the government in *Diputaciones* (provincial councils) and municipalities, the regime provided itself with an essential device to control public discourse and, therefore, to manipulate public opinion. The concentration of power in the figure of Primo de Rivera allowed him to put in place the machinery necessary to reduce political debate to a minimum. Thus he moved towards the governmental monopolisation of public political discourse. It is within this context that we have to analyse the contents and strategies of Primo’s nationalist discourse.

## THE SECULAR NATION

One of the most significant changes introduced by the dictatorship was to bring the nation to the centre of the political discourse. From the manifesto of September the 13<sup>th</sup> until the last day of the regime, Primo used a patriotic language in which the salvation and the regeneration of the nation became both the political aim and the justification of the dictatorship. Therefore, it is essential to start our analysis by understanding the *primorriverista* concept of nation and the myths associated with it.

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<sup>11</sup> Manuel Rubio Cabeza, *Crónica de la Dictadura* [Madrid: 1986], 124.

<sup>12</sup> On the work of the censorship regime under Primo it is especially interesting the book one of the directors of the censorship cabinet, Caledonio de la Iglesia, *La censura por dentro* [Madrid: 1930]. The quotation in pages 75-76. See also Francisco Villanueva, *La dictadura militar: II tomo de “Obstáculos tradicionales”* [Madrid: 1930], 146-162; Gonzao Santonja, *De lápiz rojo a lápiz libre* [Barcelona: 1986]; M. Cruz Seoane, “El régimen de censura bajo la Dictadura de Primo de Rivera: efectos secundarios”, in Manuel Tufiñón de Lara (ed.), *La prensa en los siglos XIX y XX* [Bilbao: 1986], 233-243.

The idea of the Spanish nation that Primo de Rivera promoted heavily relied on the Conservative-Traditionalist canon. The dictator defined the nation as a “supreme spiritual entity” forged by religion and history.<sup>13</sup> In his view of the historical formation of Spain, the different “nationalities” of the Iberian Peninsula had unified into a single nation during Middle Ages and crystallized in a “sacred union” during the reign of the Catholic Kings and the conquest of America.<sup>14</sup> By the turn of the sixteenth century, a “providential unity” had been achieved via the military struggles and “civilizing” missions in the New World, and the “Spanish race” was created. Nevertheless, Primo’s conception of the fatherland also integrated principles from the Liberal vision of Spain. He considered the nation as composed by a community of citizens with equal rights and duties and the state was understood as the sovereign representation of the nation.<sup>15</sup> Indeed, during the first two years of the regime, Primo capitalized upon the secular ideological legacy of regenerationism, Maurism and, above all, military nationalism. The myths of the ‘Iron Surgeon’, the ‘regeneration of the nation’, and the empire became the essential points in the official discourse. In turn, these themes were used in the discourse as strategies of justification of the military dictatorship and the destruction of the Restoration political class.

The discourse of national salvation delivered by the Military Directory was based on the organic conception of Spain popularised by the regenerationists. In his manifesto of the 13<sup>th</sup> of September Primo declared that the patria had been close to a “tragic and dishonourable end” due to the actions of professional politicians, separatists and communists, and justified the coup as the response to the demands of the “healthy people”. In taking power, the military believed they were saving a moribund Spain while they arrogate to themselves the interpretation of the will of the ‘real’ nation represented by the people. The manifesto and the subsequent declarations of the dictator also showed that Primo considered himself Costa’s ‘Iron Surgeon’. During the initial stages of the dictatorship, Primo declared his rule as a “brief parenthesis” in the constitutional order to operate on the ‘sick body of the nation’. The cure required extreme measures but would eventually extirpate the cancer represented by the old oligarchies. Once the surgical work was done, the argument followed, the

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<sup>13</sup> Primo de Rivera, *Disertación*, 12.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, 14. Some other Primo’s comments on the Catholic Kings as the founders of the Spanish nation see *La Nación* 18-10-1925 and 22-10-1925.

<sup>15</sup> Primo de Rivera, *Disertación*, 12-14; *El Pensamiento*, 109.

gap between the 'real Spain' and the 'official Spain' denounced by the regenerationists would cease to exist.

The regenerationist discourse adopted by the Military Directory employed a profuse scientific vocabulary. Flamboyant medical metaphors illustrated an official rhetoric in which old political elites were represented as "worms eating the nation", Catalan separatists portrayed as "sick people" who needed to be cured, and some Spaniards' psychology considered "lethargic" (*abúlica*).<sup>16</sup> In adopting on regenerationist discourse, the Military Directory sought the backing of many different sectors of Spanish society. Regenerationist topics and vocabulary had penetrated deep into the Spaniards consciousness, most notably among the middle classes, during the final years of the Restoration and the popularization of these ideas as expressed in Primo's manifesto had a large potential audience.<sup>17</sup> The fact that Primo at first found a firm support not only from all groups of the new right but also from the conservative and liberal press shows to what extent the myth of the Iron Surgeon had deeply infiltrated Spanish society in the years prior to 1923.<sup>18</sup> It also indicates that the strategy of incorporating the regenerationist discourse initially paid off in terms of political support.

The revitalisation of the fatherland demanded two essential and complementary achievements: the destruction of the ruling political class and the creation of a new type of 'patriotic citizenry'. Several policies were soon put into practice towards these ends. The destruction of the old oligarchies had begun with the coup itself and the substitution of civil governors by military governors, which deprived the *caciquil* network of the essential provincial connection with Madrid. During the first days of the dictatorship, the directory issued new anti-*caciquil* legislation designed to undermine further the old politicians' power base and to repair the public administration. The Royal Decrees of 18 September and 1 October 1923 reorganized the central administration following the criteria of efficiency, simplification and

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<sup>16</sup> For the portrait of politicians as worms see Primo's official note of August 1925 in Rubio, *Crónica* [1974], 154. For some Spaniards suffering *abulia* see Primo de Rivera, *Disertación*, 23. Some other medical metaphors in *La Nación*, 19-10-1925.

<sup>17</sup> González Calbet, *La Dictadura*, 50-51, 265.

<sup>18</sup> This is obviously not to say that all these groups understood the role of the Iron Surgeon in the same terms. Liberals thought the task of the Iron Surgeon had to be temporary and brief, while Social Catholics defended a temporary but long-term work. For the initial support of the liberal press for the surgical mission of the military see, *El Sol*, 2-10-1923. For the Social Catholics see *El Debate*, 14-9-1923; 13-10-1923; 28-9-1923. For the monarchist right see *ABC*, 14-9-1923.

economic austerity so important to the military mentality.<sup>19</sup> These decrees established the immediate removal of those functionaries who simultaneously held two posts and contemplated strong sanctions for those unjustified absences from work. Although these measures did not wipe out *caciquismo*, there can be little doubt that they were a propaganda success for the government. The wave of denunciations against politicians and municipal officials from the public and the good reception this legislation found in the press show how many sectors of society felt more than happy to see the old political elite dismissed and sometimes jailed.<sup>20</sup>

The creation of a new type of patriotic citizen was certainly a more ambitious task within the goal of national regeneration. Here Primo's ideas heavily relied on the Maurist concept of citizenry, as an interclass conservative conglomerate tantamount to the 'real Spain'. The idea of nation behind this concept of citizen was essentially civic. The fatherland, as one of the apologists of the regime put it, was "composed by equal Spanish citizens with the same rights and duties".<sup>21</sup> Primo was certainly more interested in obligations than in rights, and when describing his idea of citizenry he linked it to the "fulfilment of four duties", namely military service, paying taxes, publicly supporting the regime, and working.<sup>22</sup> First, and foremost, the good citizen had to fulfil his military duty for the patria. Primo was fully aware of the importance that serving in the army had in inculcating the population with military and nationalist values and demanded that all citizens must join. Secondly, citizens should contribute to the regeneration of the nation not just by paying taxes to the state but also by taking active part in the national "collective work". According to Primo, no citizen could neglect his "collective duties", namely expressing support for the dictatorship in public demonstrations and filling public posts without partisan spirit. Interestingly, Primo added voting to the list of citizen's duties, but he did not specify in which sort of elections citizens would cast their votes.<sup>23</sup>

The second main influence in the formation of the *primorriverista* concept of citizen came from the army barracks. Military nationalist literature had popularised a series of authoritarian, irrational and militarist ideas among the officers in the years

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<sup>19</sup> *La Gaceta*, 19-9-1923 and 2-10-1923.

<sup>20</sup> For tens of denunciations from the public in the first three months of the dictatorship see Archivo Histórico Nacional (hereafter AHN), Circulares, varios y provincias, folders 1 and 2, Gobernación Serie A, Bundle 18 A.

<sup>21</sup> Mask (pseudonymous of Enrique Díaz Retg), *Hacia la España nueva* [Madrid: 1925], 268.

<sup>22</sup> Primo de Rivera, *Disertación*, 19-23.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, 22-23.



prior to 1923 and the *primorriveristas* seemed happy to incorporate them into the regime's discourse.<sup>24</sup> Notorious among the new ideas of the *primorriverista* military was the need to shape a "New Man", a new Spaniard, in the form of the "Citizen-Soldier".<sup>25</sup> The concept of Citizen-Soldier can be traced back to the writings of liberal officers in the 1890s.<sup>26</sup> However, thirty years on the idea had been transformed from a democratic educational ideal based on the French Revolution and the writings of Toqueville into a romantic nationalist concept in which the goal was the formation of a permanent soldier, as part of the organic nation, acting in civil society.<sup>27</sup> This is not to suggest that the *primorriveristas'* view of the Citizen-Soldier was completely stripped of liberal ideas. The French Revolution concept of the army as the 'nation in arms' and the idea of citizen's rights and duties was still present in the *primorriverista* literature of the 1920s. And yet the importance of romantic and irrational ideas was paramount in a discourse that constantly emphasised historic military deeds, religious vocabulary and patriotic symbolism over Enlightenment views. In fact, this concept of the Citizen-Soldier bore a close resemblance to the Fascist *cittadini soldati*, which also took the French revolutionary myth of moral regeneration of the masses and transformed it into a policy of state-led moral indoctrination of the entire population. As in the Spanish case, the ultimate goal for Mussolini was the creation of a *uomo nuovo*.<sup>28</sup>

The idea behind the creation of a new citizen, a new patriotic Spaniard, was to co-opt the lower-classes via nationalist indoctrination. As early as 1916, Primo wrote that the Great War would lead to "key moral transformations" and called for propagating patriotic and military postulates not only in schools but also among adults in working class areas.<sup>29</sup> In the period 1917-1923, the socio-political tensions in Spain and the post-WWI revolutionary upheavals across Europe only hardened Primo's belief in the need to use nationalism as a cure for revolution. Once in power, the formation of a new politically mobilised and militarised citizen became a priority to Primo. It was evident to the dictator that the emergence of patriotic citizens needed all the help

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<sup>24</sup> See Chapter 4.

<sup>25</sup> Teodoro de Iradier y Herrero, *Catecismo del ciudadano* [Madrid: 1924], 18-19.

<sup>26</sup> Pedro A. Berenguer, Prologue to Ruiz Fornells, *Educación moral del soldado* [Toledo: 1894], iii-iv.

<sup>27</sup> Iradier, *Catecismo*, 4-5, 8, 15, 17-19.

<sup>28</sup> Gentile, *The sacralization*, 96.

<sup>29</sup> The would-be dictator proposed the use of modern propaganda means such as cinema to reach a bigger audience. Primo de Rivera, prologue to García and de la Matta, *Elementos de educación moral del soldado* [Sevilla: 1916], xi-xv.

possible from the state. The creation of the *delegados gubernativos*, the *Somatén Nacional* and the *Unión Patriótica* (UP) responded to different necessities, but they all have in common a role as ‘educators’ in nationalist values. The *delegados gubernativos*, military officers assigned to all judicial districts (*cabezas de partido*) in the country to ‘supervise’ local life, aimed at the destruction of the *caciquil* provincial network. But the Military Directory also wanted the *delegados* to create “a new citizenry in towns and villages”.<sup>30</sup> This led to the organisation of patriotic mass rallies and military parades in support of the regime together with the promotion of governmental campaigns on morals and patriotic duties. For this educational mission, the *delegados* were instructed to organise patriotic conferences, which should promote the virtues of the “Spanish race” and emphasise the duties of defending the Fatherland, respecting authority and paying taxes.<sup>31</sup>

The *delegados* were also regimented to organise the local *Somatén* in their districts, under the supervision of the Captain General of the region. The extension of the Catalan institution to the whole country three days after the coup was an initial defensive measure to endow the regime with a civilian militia capable of backing the military government in case it came under pressure.<sup>32</sup> Combined with the idea of mobilising the population to maintain social order, the Military Directory conceived the *Somatén* as an organisation devoted “to strengthen the spirit of citizenry”.<sup>33</sup> As Primo de Rivera stated in a meeting in front of 8,000 ‘provincial leaders’ of the UP, the *Somatén* was a “school of citizenry” that was propagating the ideas of patriotic sacrifices and duties all around Spain.<sup>34</sup>

The dictator also had great pedagogical plans for the UP. The members of the official party were encouraged to aid the directory in “shaping the soul of the Spanish youth” with nationalist values, and in 1925 the Youth Sections of the UP were formed

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<sup>30</sup> RD creating the *delegados gubernativos* in *La Gaceta* 21-10-1923.

<sup>31</sup> Instructions to the *delegados* in RD 20-10-10, RO 9-12-1923, RD 20-3-1924. See also Primo’s letters to the *delegados* 5-4-1924; 24-4-1924. For the instruction from the Minister of the Interior see, for instance, “Previsiones que para el mejor desempeño de sus cargos deben tener presentes los Delegados Gubernativos”, 7-12-1923, Archivo General de la Administración del Estado (hereafter AGA), Subsecretaría Sección de Orden Público, Interior, Box 149. See also Martínez Anido’s letter to the *delegados*, 1-1-1924; Martínez Anido’s telegram to the *delegados*, 4-1-1924 in AHN, Presidencia del Gobierno, Bundle 331, Box 1.

<sup>32</sup> Eduardo Gozález Calleja, “La defensa armada del orden social durante la dictadura de Primo de Rivera, 1923-1930”, in *España entre dos siglos*, 85.

<sup>33</sup> RD creating the *Somatén*, 17-9-1923 in *La Gaceta*, 18-9-1923.

<sup>34</sup> Primo’s speech in the Palacio del Hielo in *La Nación*, 19-10-1925.

with that particular aim.<sup>35</sup> Moreover, showing his belief that even the poorest classes should be educated on nationalist principles, the dictator demanded that the party affiliates participate in the government's campaign for the eradication of illiteracy by creating an educational network in urban areas and the countryside. The network should reach every single family and its members would teach not only reading and writing skills but also patriotic values.<sup>36</sup>

There can be no doubt that the "revolution from above", which Primo vowed the Military Directory was undertaking, aimed to impregnate many sectors of society with nationalist ideas.<sup>37</sup> The 'awakening of the neutral masses' that Maurists had advocated was attempted by the regime in the first years of the dictatorship. However, under Primo the idea of citizenry gained a strong militaristic character. This was not just due to a slightly different conception of citizenry to Maura's defended by the dictator. As the whole framework set up to promote the ideas of citizenry and nation (via *delegados*, *Somatenes*, and UP) was ultimately controlled by the military governors, the patriotic values transmitted became inevitably militarised. This re-elaboration of the Maurist message in militarist terms potentially had a wide audience. In the years prior to 1923 under a state of shock produced by the Bolshevik Revolution and the numerous industrial actions in Spain, many middle-class citizens had joined urban and rural militias to defend the status quo and confront the leftist challenge in the streets. National salvation, invigorating patriotic feelings, and the strengthening of the Spanish race, became the main ideological tenets of these para-military groups which had sprung up all around Spain before September 1923.<sup>38</sup> The *primorriverista* emphasis on authority, patriotism, property and social order was thus music to the ears of many in the bourgeoisie. The rapid militancy growth of the *Somatén* and the UP during the Military Directory can be partially explained by the positive reception of the *primorriverista* message among a sector of society that had itself been demanding social order and authority.

Finally, let us turn our attention to the imperial myth as an integral part of the nationalist discourse promoted by the Military Directory. As explained in the previous chapter, the harsh contrast between Spain's imperial past and the Disaster of 1898 had

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<sup>35</sup> Primo's speech at the national assembly of the UP provincial and local leaders in December 1925, in Pérez, *La dictadura*, 73-74.

<sup>36</sup> *La Nación*, 3-11-1925.

<sup>37</sup> Primo de Rivera's official note 21-1-1924, in Primo de Rivera, *El pensamiento*, 26.

haunted the nationalist Right during the first two decades of the twentieth century. It was no coincidence that Primo mentioned in his manifesto “the picture of misfortunes and immorality which began in 1898 and threaten Spain with an early, tragic and dishonourable end”. For the dictator, who had served in Cuba and the Philippines in the 1890s, the loss of the empire was due to the incompetence of civilian rule and parliamentary politics. What followed the Disaster was just a deepening of the progress leading towards national disintegration - whose most dangerous manifestation was the growth of Catalan nationalism - that the army had to put an end to in 1923. In other words, it was a distorted interpretation of the loss of the empire which nourished the ideological justification of authoritarian rule.<sup>39</sup>

The use of the imperial myth as discursive tool to justify the dictatorship should not come as a surprise since the idea of empire lay at the very core of the military’s concept of Spain. As explained by Primo, the nation’s historical identity had been forged in the battlefields during the Reconquest, and the American empire was the extension of the Spanish military spirit to the New World. For the army, the empire of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries represented the peak of national grandeur, when Spaniards had successfully defended European Christianity against the Ottomans and expanded civilisation to the Americas. Spain was then both the sentinel of Europe and the first civilising nation in history. It was this imperial rhetoric of Spain as protector of civilisation that the Military Directory used to justify the persistence of the colonial adventure in Northern Africa. True, when Primo seized power he was well-known for his ‘abandonist’ postures. In the years before 1923, he had stated repeatedly that the future of Spain did not lie in Africa, and proposed to swap Gibraltar for Ceuta with the British.<sup>40</sup> And yet, soon after seizing power, Primo realised that the survival of his regime was inevitably linked to finding a solution to the Moroccan problem. The *Rifian* offensive in March 1924 and the pressures from the ‘Africanist’ officers of the Spanish army convinced the dictator that a withdrawal from the protectorate would be a betrayal of the nation’s heroic past, with very serious

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<sup>38</sup> Fernando del Rey, “Ciudadanos honrados y somatenistas”, *Estudios de Historia Social*, n. 42-43 (1987), 99, 130.

<sup>39</sup> Balfour, *The End*, 230-231.

<sup>40</sup> Miguel Primo de Rivera, *La cuestión del día. Gibraltar y África* [Cádiz: 1917].

political costs at home.<sup>41</sup> The dictator then opted for a complete military invasion of the protectorate.

It was no coincidence that in the months that preceded the landing in the Alhucemas Bay on 5 September 1925, Primo rehashed the old imperial rhetoric. In early July, an official note to the nation alerted that “a wormhole in the Rif would be a grave illness for Western peace and civilization”. Here, Primo argued that “the figure of Abd-el-Krim and his unborn kingdom could be the axes of a social-religious movement with a decisive influence in the West”, since Morocco was becoming the place in where “all the rebels of the universe [...] look for a field to cultivate their morbid microbes”.<sup>42</sup> The following month, when explaining why he had switched his policy on the Moroccan question, Primo alleged that the Communists had inflamed the rebellion and were about to create an Islamic-Bolshevik republic, which posed a real danger for Spanish national security.<sup>43</sup>

In portraying such a picture of the Rifian tribes Primo was following a long-standing Spanish tradition of depicting Moors as barbaric sub-humans, a view shared by middle and lower classes alike.<sup>44</sup> Nineteenth-century Spanish culture was imbued with myths about Moroccans, who represented the archetypal Other of Spanish national identity.<sup>45</sup> At the turn of the century a layer of pseudo-scientific rhetoric and civilising zeal was added to the traditional romantic vision of Moroccans fostering the process of ‘orientalisation’.<sup>46</sup> By the 1920s, the *primorriveristas* added a new dimension to this process and presented the Moor as Communist - a feature that increased the alien nature of the external enemy and potential threat to western civilisation. A month after the landing of Alhucemas, Primo’s second in command, Martínez Anido, exposed the supposed Communist nature of the African tribes and declared Europe and America should be grateful to Spain for saving the civilized world from the Islamic-Bolshevist menace. Martínez Anido, who in the summer of

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<sup>41</sup> For Primo’s tactics in Morocco and the role of the *Africanistas* see Sebastian Balfour, *Deadly Embrace. Morocco and the Road to the Spanish Civil War* [Oxford: 2002], 93-120.

<sup>42</sup> Official note, 11-7-1925, in *El pensamiento*, 144.

<sup>43</sup> Primo’s article in *Revista de Tropas Coloniales*, 31-8-1925. For the alleged Communist connections with the Rifian rebels see also Primo in *La Nación*, 19-10-1925; and Primo to Sanjurjo, 4-5-1925, in Armiñán, *Epistolario*, 125.

<sup>44</sup> Aurora Riviére Gómez, *Orientalismo y nacionalismo español* [Madrid: 2000]; María Rosa de Maradiaga, “Imagen del moro en la memoria colectiva del pueblo español y retorno del moro en la Guerra Civil de 1936”, *Revista Internacional de Sociología*, n. 46 (1988), 577-599.

<sup>45</sup> Balfour, *Deadly Embrace*, 194.

1923 had proposed a massive blitz of the rebel villages and corps with toxic and incendiary bombs, was also keen to proclaim the benefits of civilisation and emphasised “the numerous gains the Spanish protectorate [would] bring to the indigenous peoples”.<sup>47</sup> It is quite evident that in promoting the colonial adventure in these terms the government presented a modern reinterpretation of imperial Spain, in which *Rifians* became the substitutes for the American Indians and Islamic-Bolsheviks for the Ottoman menace. The novelty of the discourse lay in the introduction of the Communist threat and the biological vocabulary, but the main ideas of Spain as the sentinel of the West and a civiliser remained at the core of the imperial myth.

The practical use of imperial discourse was the justification for an extremely unpopular war in Spain. The Military Directory wasted no time in capitalising on the victory over the Rifians and used it for internal nationalist propaganda. Although the war in Morocco was far from being over, a Royal Decree of 6 October, 1925, described the landing in Alhucemas as “the most arduous enterprise ever to be carried out by a colonial army” and awarded Primo the highest distinction of the Spanish military, the Gran Cruz Laureada de San Fernando.<sup>48</sup> If before the invasion of Alhucemas, Primo had been linked to Mussolini, Mustafa Kemal and even Lenin for his revolutionary zeal and his role as ‘saviour of the fatherland’, in the autumn of 1925 the *primorriverista* press compared Primo’s military talents to those of Napoleon’s.<sup>49</sup> The dictator himself considered it was a good moment for patriotic exaltation. When returning from Africa he delayed his arrival to Madrid in order to visit some towns in Andalusia and participate in public celebrations organised in his honour. Once in the capital, the dictator was awarded the title of ‘Adoptive Son’ by all the majors of the province of Madrid. Military parades were celebrated all around Spain to commemorate the conquest and the repatriated troops received a heroes’ welcome in a tour organised by the regime in early October 1925. The final destination of the tour was Madrid, where the troops marched on the crowded streets of

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<sup>46</sup> For the European process of ‘orientalisation’ see Edward Said classic book *Orientalism: Western Conceptions of the Orient* [Harmondsworth: 1995]. For the colonial construction of the ‘other’ see Homi K. Bhabha, *The location of culture* [London: 1994], 66-84.

<sup>47</sup> Cited in Casassas, *La Dictadura*, 156-157. For the plans for a massive bombardment of rebel territory in August 1923 see Balfour, *Deadly Embrace*, 138.

<sup>48</sup> The award was a petition of the Military Directory accepted by the king, RD 6-10-1925.

<sup>49</sup> For the comparisons to Mussolini and Mustafa Kemal see, *El Somatén*, August 1924. The exaltation of Primo’s military talent and the comparison to Napoleon and Lenin in Mask, *Hacia*, 189.

the capital in a parade presided over by the King and military, civil and religious authorities.<sup>50</sup> Eager to mobilise the population, the regime ordered the *delegados* to organise “patriotic acts” in their districts in memory of those fallen for the patria. The reports of the *delegados* and the civil governors confirm that dozens of these ‘patriotic acts’ were successfully organised by the military. Some towns and villages even renamed their streets and plazas with the name of the dictator or the anniversary of the military coup as a part of the celebration.<sup>51</sup>

At a discursive level, the Moroccan War allowed the *primorriveristas* to foster the imperial myth in order to instil patriotic feelings among Spaniards. By emphasising the “barbaric” nature of the “external enemy” the government played a safe xenophobic card of great resonance in the Spanish public. For decades Spaniards of all classes had been educated in the belief that Moroccans represented danger and the *primorriverista* reinforced the threat by presenting the *Rifian* rebellion as Communist-inspired. By presenting the Moroccan War as a problem of national security, the *primorriverista* discourse displayed a justifying strategy, in which the very existence of the dictatorship at home became ‘legitimised’ by the alleged threat posed to the fatherland. Furthermore, victory in Alhucemas was a key propaganda success for the dictatorship. It not only offered the regime the possibility to portray the ‘Iron Surgeon’ as a military genius and natural leader, but it also provided a chance to mobilise the population and, therefore, to indoctrinate citizens in nationalist ceremonies. No less importantly, victory in Alhucemas paved the way for ending a conflict deeply unpopular in Spain. Here was the promise of a great change to come.

## THE SACRED NATION

Primo’s regime pushed the identification of the nation with Catholicism further than any other previous government. As mentioned above, the *primorriverista* concept of nation had a strong religious component, for Catholicism was perceived to be an essential element in the historical formation of Spain and Spaniards as essentially Catholics.<sup>52</sup> This religious concept of the nation was associated with the prolific use of a Catholic vocabulary integrated into the *primorriverista* patriotic discourse. As some contemporary writers rightly observed, Primo’s speeches and

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<sup>50</sup> Rubio, *Crónica* [1974], 161-162.

<sup>51</sup> For the instructions to the delegados and the celebration of ‘patriotic acts’, AHN, Presidencia del Gobierno, Bundle 331, Box 2.

notes were soaked in a religious rhetoric, in which patriotism was considered a “faith”, its propagation defined as “preaching” and the members of the official party urged to become “apostles” of Spanish nationalism.<sup>53</sup> For the dictator, adoring the patria was “sacrosanct”, the national union “holy”, and talking against the fatherland “a civic sin”.<sup>54</sup> His own role as the ‘saviour’ of Spain was repeatedly presented as God’s will and Primo seems to have believed that the Providence had chosen him to save the nation.<sup>55</sup> Put it in another way, the civic myth of the ‘Iron Surgeon’ was sanctified as a divine figure by the regime’s propaganda.

One of the biggest promoters of the religious-military concept of Spain was Alfonso XIII. The monarch, who had been educated under the tutelage of an Integrist priest, made his ultramontane views very clear when visiting Italy in November 1923. At the Vatican, the king affirmed that Spain had been and still was “the soldier of religion” and offered the Pope the utmost assistance should he declare a new crusade.<sup>56</sup> In return, Alfonso XIII expressed the hope that the Pope would use its influence to foster patriotic unity among the different regions and peoples of Spain. The idea was simple: nationalism and Catholicism were highly compatible and the promotion of the former had to be concomitant to the strengthening of the latter. The Vatican should promote the cult of the nation among its Spanish flock and the newly established military government would support Catholicism at home and abroad.

Such clericalist speaking truly shocked liberal newspapers, but the conservative press and the Catholic hierarchy warmly welcomed the speech. Rafael Sánchez Mazas, then the *ABC* correspondent in Rome and eventually one of the founders of *Falange Española*, wrote that the “petition for a Papal contribution to the union of all Spanish Catholics in faith and patriotism – both signs of the most elevated citizenry - constituted one of the essential points of what could be called our policy in the Vatican”.<sup>57</sup> The pro-fascist journalist urged the episcopate to assist the state “in

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<sup>52</sup> See, for example, Primo’s speech at the *Fiesta del Somatén, El Somatén*, May 1924.

<sup>53</sup> Among the many examples see the discourse of Primo in Barcelona in October 1923, in Rubio *Crónica* [1974], 77-78.

<sup>54</sup> Miguel Primo de Rivera, *Disertación*, 13-14, 36.

<sup>55</sup> On 26 May, 1924, in a discourse at the *Fiesta del Somatén* in Zaragoza, later published as an official note, Primo declared that “God had reserved” him the role of dictator and saviour of Spain. Primo, *El pensamiento*, 214. More Primo’s comments on national salvation and providential intervention in Pérez, *La dictadura*, 76, 209-211.

<sup>56</sup> The king’s speech in *ABC*, 22-11-1923.

<sup>57</sup> *ABC*, 22-11-1923. Sánchez Mazas had had the chance to interview Mussolini on November the 16<sup>th</sup>. Interestingly, the Italian dictator defended the merging of religious and national identities stating the need to achieve a “union between the good Italian and the good Catholic” -a sort of argument used later



the civil and political life” and, quoting Mussolini, demanded a new state legislation to “harmonise civic and religious duties”. The Catholic hierarchy was also delighted. From the first, it had supported Primo and instructed parishioners to fulfil their duties as “Christian citizens” praying for the patria, the king and the dictator. After the royal visit to Italy, the Spanish prelates ordered the king’s speech to be read in all the churches across the country.<sup>58</sup> Even the Vatican seemed to have felt happy with the promotion of a sacred Spain. The Pope publicly blessed the “Spanish nation” in various occasions and the nuncio in Madrid consecrated Alfonso XIII as the new “Catholic King”, while praising the Lord for the Christian victory of the Spanish army in Africa.<sup>59</sup>

The use of the Catholic Church to indoctrinate the population on nationalist dogmas was one of the central strategies of Primo throughout the entire dictatorship. Primo wanted the priests to get involve in the regeneration of the nation and demanded active ecclesiastical cooperation with UP members in their ‘educational’ campaigns.<sup>60</sup> The idea, the dictator confessed in a letter to Admiral Magaz, was to use the Church politically and socially to propagate the unity of the fatherland and to combat Catalanism.<sup>61</sup> At first, the strategy seems to have worked and the Catholic hierarchy openly co-operated with the regime. For instance, when in late 1924 the government launched a propaganda campaign against its critics in exile, the dictator was pleased to find the Church gave its full support and mobilised its flock to demonstrate in opposition to some “wrongly called Spaniards abroad”.<sup>62</sup>

The Military Directory also fostered the equation of the nation with the Catholic legacy of Spain in the field of representations and ceremonies. Various incarnations of the Virgin Mary served as guiders and protectors of Spain complementing the long-standing representation of the nation as ‘Mother’.<sup>63</sup> A very common image in the Catholic nationalist literature at the beginning of the twentieth century was the figure of the Virgin as a protective ‘Mother Spain’. Primo’s

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by the *primorriverista* ideologues. The interview of Sánchez Mazas with Mussolini is reviewed in the British Ambassador to Madrid’s report on the King and Primo de Rivera visit to Italy, see “Italo-Spanish Relations”, Dossiers from 1920-1923, Public Records Office, Foreign Office, 185/1743.

<sup>58</sup> Rubio, *Crónica* [1974], 83.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*, 141, 145.

<sup>60</sup> *ABC*, 25-1-1925; *La Nación*, 3-11-1925.

<sup>61</sup> Primo to Magaz, 2-6-1925, in Armistáñ, *Epistolario*, 141-142.

<sup>62</sup> Ben-Ami, *Fascism*, 102. For the relationships between the *primorriverista* state and the Catholic Church see Chapter 5.

propaganda often used it linked to the concepts of unity, sacrifice and natural love.<sup>64</sup> Special attention was devoted to the Virgin Pilar, Patron Saint of the Spanish armies, whose image was already extremely popular among the public. In the king's words, she had been "the people's driving force" in the fight for independence against Napoleon's troops and her image represented the "essence of patriotism".<sup>65</sup> Related to the Spaniards' deeds in the past, the Virgin was apparently also 'helpful' in more recent triumphs. Primo himself declared that in the hours before the landing in Alhucemas he had entrusted victory to the Virgin and that she had responded positively.<sup>66</sup>

Primo and Alfonso XIII's official visits to Spanish cities regularly included public religious ceremonies as part of the events organised for the occasion.<sup>67</sup> These ceremonies were conceived as a means of mass mobilisation to show support for the regime, and were fully backed by the Catholic hierarchy always ready to praise the Lord for national salvation. It was the Church's support for the Spanish "civilising mission" in Morocco which pushed even further the identification of Catholicism with the nation. Masses for those fallen in Africa or to commemorate Spanish victory over the Moroccan rebels became a central part of the nationalist rallies and military parades presided over by Primo. The consecration of the national flag and the blessing of the troops became paramount in these nationalist rituals, in which thousands of ordinary citizens took part.<sup>68</sup> Thus the sacralization of the nation went beyond political speeches and became performed as a Christian ritual.

The religious character of nationalist ceremonies was not limited to the visits of the dictator and the king. One of the major contributions of the dictatorship to the expansion of patriotic ceremonies was their propagation to towns and villages all around Spain. Together with the ceremonies for those fallen in Africa, the Fiesta of the Sanctification of the *Somatén* flag was the most widely celebrated. Co-ordinated by Martínez Anido from the Minister of the Interior and organised by provincial

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<sup>63</sup> For the representation of Spain as 'Mother' see Primo's public letter to Francisco Puig i Alfonso, 6-12-1923, in Casassas, *La dictadura*, 113-116.

<sup>64</sup> For example, *El Somatén*, May 1924 and May 1925.

<sup>65</sup> Rubio, *Crónica* [1974], 49.

<sup>66</sup> Primo's comments in José Pemartín Sanjuan, *Los valores históricos en la Dictadura Española*, [Madrid: 1928], 148. See also *La Nación*, 19-10-1925.

<sup>67</sup> All *primorriverista* and royal visits to Spanish cities were carefully organised. The Bureau of the President co-ordinated the actions of Civil Governors, delegates, mayors, *somatenes*, UP leaders and rank and file militants to secure success of the events. AHN, Presidencia del Gobierno, Bundle 175.

<sup>68</sup> For an account of these ceremonies Rubio, *Crónica* [1974], 128-129, 143-44, 157, 161.

military authorities, the celebration usually followed a similar pattern everywhere. It began with a military parade by the members of the army and the local *Somatén*, followed by a open-air military mass (*misa de campaña*). Once the mass was over, the ecclesiastical authorities blessed the *Somatén* and the Spanish flags and delivered short speeches supporting the war in Africa and the dictatorship at home. Then military authorities reproduced the official *primorriverista* discourse of blood, heroism and patriotic sacrifice in the African fields, while emphasising the role divine intervention played in ‘national deeds’ from Covadonga to Alhucemas. Frequently, the ceremony concluded with the official unveiling of a plaque devoted to the Spanish army or Primo de Rivera.<sup>69</sup>

Whether in huge urban ceremonies or in modest villages the Military Directory promoted a new type of nationalist discourse and ritual interweaving religious and secular elements. At the discursive level, the dictatorship interlaced scientific vocabulary with religious rhetoric and carried out a process of sacralization of the secular myths of the ‘Iron Surgeon’ and the ‘regeneration of the nation’ by linking them to divine intervention. The nation was endorsed with the Christian symbolism of death and resurrection, and the mystical connotations of blood and sacrifice of those fallen in Africa became part of the public ‘communion’ of the dictator with his people. Like Fascist Italy, all these elements became essential ingredients for a new ‘patriotic religion’, which placed the nation on the main altar.<sup>70</sup> Unlike Mussolini, Primo’s patriotic religion had the initial blessings and active participation of the Catholic Church. In the Spanish case, the new connotations of *primorriverista* official discourse was to pave the way for the ideological formulation of National Catholicism as a political religion during the Civil Directory.

## THE STATE AS PROTECTOR OF THE NATION

The dictatorship amounted to a fundamental breach with the Restoration system in terms of the role assigned to the state. The military, more than any other nationalist group, identified the state with the nation and stressed the function of the former in defending the latter. As Primo blatantly put it, the “state and its laws” were

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<sup>69</sup> Documents of the Minister of the Interior show how the celebrations of the Fiesta of the Santification of the *Somatén* Flag took place in cities, towns, and villages alike. For the account of the celebration of nationalist ceremonies in 1924 see the dozens of letters and telegraphs from the civil governors and the *delegados* to Martínez Anido in AHN, Presidencia del Gobierno, Bundle 331, Box 1. For a further analysis of these ceremonies see Chapters 4, 5 and 6.

the representation of the nation and the authorities had the duty to punish every single attack on the unity of the fatherland.<sup>71</sup> Moreover, the idea of constructing a modern, efficient and authoritarian state as a tool to regenerate the nation was in the very nature of military nationalism.<sup>72</sup> The implications of this military concern towards the state were soon felt after Primo seized power.

Although Primo did not proclaim his new vision of a strongly centralised authoritarian state until 1926, the truth is that its construction had already begun during the Military Directory. With regard to the territorial division of Spain, Primo came to power as a defender of regional administrative autonomy. In the early hours of 14 September 1923, the Captain General of Catalonia drew his first programme which included “a new administrative, governmental, and judicial [...] division of Spain”.<sup>73</sup> Much in the same manner Maurism had proposed, Primo advocated the creation of regional departments with administrative functions in the whole country. This new state division should lead to the emergence of “strong regions” but, Primo warned, never “to the loosening, or even the questioning, of patriotic ties”.<sup>74</sup> The initial option was the creation of regional departments to crush to provincial networks of the *caciques*, but also to give equal status of administrative autonomy to all regions in Spain, since Primo clearly resented the “special character” the Catalan *Mancomunitat* had gained.<sup>75</sup> Primo’s initial regionalism was not so much concerned with regional liberties but with unification of regional legislation and minimisation of Catalan particularities within the state structure. During his first months in power, Primo considered different options for a territorial re-organization, including the formation of 10 or 12 regional administrations matching the military regions.<sup>76</sup> It is telling that among the plans were proposals for dividing Catalonia by creating a Valencian region including Tarragona and an Aragonese region with Lérida inside its borders.<sup>77</sup>

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<sup>70</sup> For the Italian case see Maurizio Ridolfi, *Le feste nazionali* [Bologna: 2003], 72-92.

<sup>71</sup> Primo de Rivera, *Disertación*, 13-14.

<sup>72</sup> See Chapter 1.

<sup>73</sup> Primo’s programme in Pérez, *La Dictadura*, 23-24.

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*, 24.

<sup>75</sup> In the same line see the official note, 9-1-1924, in Primo de Rivera, *El Pensamiento*, 106-107.

<sup>76</sup> In early October 1923 Primo declared to the representatives of the three Basque provinces his intention to abolish all 49 provincial administrations and to create 10, 12 or 14 regional administrations, *La Vanguardia*, 12-10-1923.

<sup>77</sup> Josep M. Roig Rosich, *La Dictadura de Primo de Rivera a Catalunya* [Barcelona: 1992], 91-92.

Yet the dictator soon abandoned these plans for regional division all together and begun his re-structuring of the state at the municipal level. Maurists and progressive regenerationists had consistently denounced *caciquil* control of town halls as the key problem that hampered national regeneration from the bottom-up. Primo was determined to remove that burden. A Royal Decree of 30 September 1923 dissolved all town councils and put them under military control. The decree also reserved to the government the right to choose the mayor of those towns with more than 100,000 inhabitants.<sup>78</sup> Immediately after, the Directory encouraged members of the public to anonymously denounce *caciques* to the military authorities, something that proved immensely popular.<sup>79</sup> During the following months, the wave of anonymous accusations was of such magnitude that the army found difficult to cope with it. In January, Martínez Anido wrote to all Civil Governors and delegates urging them to curb the number of detentions, for he feared many of those arrested would be eventually released by the judges and this could damage the public's support for the regime.<sup>80</sup>

The creation of a new municipal statute was commanded to the young Maurist José Calvo Sotelo, then Director General of Administration, who formed a work team with Social Catholics, such as Gil Robles and the Count of Vallellano. After some weeks of deliberations and the direct 'advice' of Martínez Anido, the Military Directory approved the statute on 8 March 1924. The new law reflected an organic conception of Spain in which the municipality was described as a "complete human society" that in turn formed "natural base" of the state.<sup>81</sup> By stating that one third of the town council members had to be elected by corporations, the municipal statute also introduced for the first time since the *Ancien Régime* the principle of corporate representation. This aimed to filter the "natural" character of the locality and ultimately reaffirmed the organic dimension of the nation.<sup>82</sup>

According to Calvo Sotelo, the new legislation was far more "democratic" than the liberal one, for it recognised the right to vote to widows and single women,

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<sup>78</sup> *El Debate*, 2-10-1923.

<sup>79</sup> RD in *La Gaceta*, 1-10-1923. For the denunciations see AHN, Gobernación Serie A, Bundle 18A, folders 1 and 2.

<sup>80</sup> Martínez Anido to the Civil Governors, "Instrucciones reservadas que los Sres. Gobernadores civiles y Delegados gubernativos deberán tener presentes en sus misiones inspectoras de los Ayuntamientos", 1-1-1924. AGA, Interior, Box 149.

<sup>81</sup> See preamble to the statute in *La Gaceta*, 9-3-1924.

<sup>82</sup> William Genieys, *Les Élités Espagnoles Face à L'État* [Paris: 1997], 108-109.

and gave a higher level to autonomy to the municipalities. It also meant the suppression of medieval privileges that had remained in the liberal municipal laws. In this sense, the government claimed, the statute signified a step forward in the process of state decentralization along the Maurist lines and was a modern substitute to the “archaic” legislation of 1877.<sup>83</sup> Yet for all Calvo’s claims, the truth was that the new regulation included authoritarian features, such as the possibility to rule the municipality by governmental commission, and a strong state interventionism illustrated by the excessive legislation which attempted to regulate every single aspect of local life.<sup>84</sup>

Based himself on an organic conception of the nation, Primo considered the municipality as the fatherland’s “primary cell” on which vigour partially depended the “health of the national body”.<sup>85</sup> The province came next in the *primorriverista* endeavour to regenerate the nation. The second step towards the transformation of the liberal state was taken with the promulgation of the Provincial Statute on 21 March 1925. Calvo Sotelo and his team were again responsible for the work. As in the case of the Municipal Statute, they claimed to be following principles of democratisation and decentralisation and, yet again, they introduced corporative representation and reinforced the power of the state.<sup>86</sup> The statute emphasised the province as an historical reality and the perfect link between the municipality and the state. Considered the natural bases of the state, the municipalities were represented at the provincial level by the *diputaciones*, which in turn were responsible to, and in fact controlled by, the civil governors.<sup>87</sup> Since the civil governors were directly appointed from Madrid, it hardly needs to be said that this state structure gave an indisputable power to the central government. The authoritarian political practices of the regime only confirmed the centralist character of the statute, for the civil governors formed, dissolved, and renewed both *diputaciones* and town councils as they pleased during the whole dictatorship.<sup>88</sup>

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<sup>83</sup> The preamble of the statute acknowledge the influence of Maura’s ideas in the text. For a defence of the modernising, democratic and decentralising principles of statute see Calvo Sotelo, *L’Autonomie Municipale*, 11-12, 20-27, 48-51; *Mis servicios al Estado* [Madrid: 1974], 35-46.

<sup>84</sup> Calbet, *La dictadura*, 241-242.

<sup>85</sup> “Manifiesto referente a la significación de la Unión Patriótica, en relación con los problemas nacionales”, 10-4-1925, in Casa Ramos, *Dos años*, 841.

<sup>86</sup> The Provincial Statute in *La Gaceta*, 21-4-1925, n. 80, 1446-1483.

<sup>87</sup> Calvo Sotelo, *Mis servicios*, 56-58.

<sup>88</sup> Calbet, *La dictadura*, 244-245.

This territorial and administrative conception of Spain had obvious ideological and political implications. In presenting the province as the direct link with the state, the statute eliminated the region as an intermediate bond. In fact, the new legislation specifically forbade the creation of any sort of association among provinces and, consequently, the *Mancomunitat* was abolished the same day the Provincial Statute was implemented. Primo's conversion to 'provincialism' was only a means of discarding his initial regionalism and creating a centralised state. In an official note coinciding with the promulgation of the Provincial Statute, the dictator explained his abandonment of "historical regionalism". He acknowledged that in 1923 he had believed that regional decentralisation was a good way of "strengthening the ties of national union in Spain", but the functioning of the *Mancomunitat* had forced him to change his mind. He argued the Catalan institution had promoted anti-Spanish sentiments and exalted pro-Catalanist feelings, which in turn were spreading pro-independence ambitions among the population. According to this logic, the creation of a regional administrative division of the state would lead to the glorification of regional particularities and, therefore, "contribute to ruin the great work of the national unity".<sup>89</sup> As Primo crudely put it in a letter to Cambó, the masses' conceptions were "simplistic" and could not understand subtle differentiations between the promotion of love for the region and the fostering of love for the nation.<sup>90</sup> Thus, the idea of region, Primo insisted throughout 1925, had to be silenced for a quarter of a century so that the Catalanist problem would disappear.<sup>91</sup>

In portraying regionalism as the path to separatism, the regime opted for the identification of Spain with centralisation as defended by military nationalism and, hence, the old Maurist and traditionalist idea of a regional Spain compatible with a great nation was jettisoned. When in the summer of 1926 the dictator announced his vision of a new state structure, the implications of the hierarchical, organic, and anti-regionalist concept of the nation-state elaborated during the Military Directory became evident. In a new manifesto to the nation, Primo described the "family, with its ancient virtues and its modern concept of citizenry," as "the cell of the municipality". The latter in turn constituted the basic unit of the nation and the province became "the nucleus" of the patria. On top of them, "the main vertebra in

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<sup>89</sup> Official note, 21-3-1925, in Primo de Rivera, *El Pensamiento*, 102-105.

<sup>90</sup> The letter is partially reproduced in *ibid.*, 30.

charge of directing the whole system” was the state.<sup>92</sup> It is worth observing that this concept of the nation as a hierarchical sequence of family, municipality, province and state not only put an end to whatever hopes of ‘regionalisation’ the Spanish nationalist right may have, but clearly anticipated the unitarian views defended by *Falange* in the 1930s and implemented by Franco for 40 years.

In the short term, Primo’s anti-regionalist drive was politically explosive, for it constituted a frontal ideological attack on many groups which had originally supported the dictatorship. Regional decentralisation had been on the agenda of almost every single right-wing political group in the years prior 1923. As explained in Chapter 1, Traditionalists, Maurists, Social Catholics and *lliguistas* demanded diverse forms of regional devolution.<sup>93</sup> Furthermore, in the first two decades of the twentieth century, regionalist movements emerged all around Spain, gaining a wide audience as a reaction to the pro Catalan autonomy campaign launched by the *Lliga* in 1917. Pretty much within the ideological lines of the Conservative-Traditionalist canon of Spain, these movements presented the region as the essence of the Spanish nation and proclaimed the need to politically strengthen the former as a necessary step in the “healthy regeneration” of the latter.<sup>94</sup> By presenting regionalism as the road to national dissolution Primo was not just challenging the ideological postulates of regionalists but also potentially undermining the social bases of his own regime.

The political backlash did not take long to materialise. On 1 April 1925, Don Jaime, the Carlist pretender, addressed a manifesto to the Spanish people denouncing the Military Directory’s centralist policies. Among his main grievances Don Jaime listed Primo’s attack against “regionalist aspirations [and] very especially, against the feelings of Catalonia”.<sup>95</sup> The initial political truce between the dictatorship and the Carlists was finally over. As a result the Military Directory forbade all Carlist propaganda and increased the pressure on Traditionalist militants, arresting dozens of them and closing down Carlist centres around the country.<sup>96</sup>

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<sup>91</sup> For Primo’s attacks against the *Mancomunitat* and the “quarantine” needed in Catalonia see official notes 21-3-1925 and 2-6-1925 in *ibid.*, 100-103; and *La Nación*, 22-10-1925.

<sup>92</sup> “Manifiesto a la nación”, 5-9 -1926, in Primo de Rivera, *El Pensamiento*, 34-36.

<sup>93</sup> See Chapter 1.

<sup>94</sup> Núñez Seixas, “The Region”, 495-504.

<sup>95</sup> Don Jaime “Manifiesto al Pueblo Español”, Paris, 1-3-1925. A copy of the document in AHN, Gobernación, Bundle 40 A, n. 12.

<sup>96</sup> For the arrest of Carlist militants delivering Don Jaime’s manifesto in the provinces of Alicante, Castellón, Guipúzcoa, Huesca, Jaén and Zaragoza see AHN, Gobernación, Bundle 40 A, n. 12.



Social Catholics found themselves in a difficult position. When founding the first UP sections in Valladolid in December 1923 they had made clear their regionalist aspirations.<sup>97</sup> However, when Primo changed his mind about regionalism, some cracks emerged among Social Catholics with regard to their support for the dictatorship. In Zaragoza, for instance, the formation of the UP was delayed for some months due to the obstructions posed by the Social Catholics of the *Unión Regionalista Aragonesa*, extremely reluctant to support what increasingly seemed a centralist dictatorship.<sup>98</sup> In the following months, as the regime intensified its attacks on regionalism, Social Catholics remained silent on the issue. This was part of the political price Social Catholics had to pay for their co-operation with the dictatorship.

Yet the most important *primorriverista* loss in terms of political support was the Catalan regionalist movement. The *Lliga* had welcomed the coup and during the first months of the Military Directory co-operated with the regime in Catalonia.<sup>99</sup> However, in January 1924, after a series of meetings with the dictator in Barcelona, the leaders of the *Lliga* realised Primo was not going to increase Catalan home rule.<sup>100</sup> On the contrary, he handpicked Sala, a man from the *españolista* UMN to direct the *Mancomunitat* seeking to curb the influence the *Lliga* had in the regional institution. The following year the *Mancomunitat* was dissolved. The *Lliga* had not only failed to improve the level of Catalan autonomy but had lost the regional institution which it had controlled since its foundation in 1914. This could only alienate the regionalist faction of the Catalan bourgeoisie from a dictatorship it had been so eager to support. More dramatically, by 1925 the *lliguistas*, like all Catalan regionalists and peripheral nationalists, were officially labelled “dissolving forces” working against the national unity. In the eyes of the *primorriveristas*, they had become the “enemy within”.

<sup>97</sup> *El Debate*, 2-12-1923; 7-12-1923.

<sup>98</sup> Gómez-Navarro, “La Unión Patriótica”, 101.

<sup>99</sup> For the support to Primo’s coup see the *lliguista* mouthpiece *La Veu de Catalunya*, 14-9-1923. See also the justification of this support by the President of the *Mancomunitat*, Puig i Cadafalch, in Javier Tusell, *Radiografía de un golpe de Estado* [Madrid: 1987], 69. For the overwhelming support of the Catalan bourgeoisie, both the Catalanist and *españolista* sectors, see Fernando del Rey Reguillo, “El Capitalismo Catalán y Primo de Rivera: en torno a un golpe de Estado”, *Hispania*, XLVIII/ 168 (1988), 289-307.

<sup>100</sup> Roig, *La Dictadura*, 55-66.

## THE ENEMY WITHIN

Peripheral nationalism constituted the negative pole in the *primorriverista* conception of Spain. It has been mentioned in the previous chapter that the army perceived Catalan, Basque and Galician nationalists as the ‘internal enemy’ aiming to destroy the sacred union of Spain and advocated a complete ban of ‘separatist propaganda’. Primo wholly shared the views of his comrades in arms. Already in 1918, the would-be dictator had demanded the government take tough actions against those “enemies of the patria”.<sup>101</sup> Indeed, the date of the military coup was brought forward a few days due to anger felt amongst the Barcelona garrison after the united demonstration of Catalan, Basque, and Galician nationalists on 11 September 1923.<sup>102</sup> And, it should be remembered here, in his first manifesto, Primo denounced the “shameless separatist propaganda” as one of the main reasons to justify the coup.

Unsurprisingly, the Military Directory sought to combat peripheral nationalism through repression. Only five days after the coup, the government promulgated the “Royal Decree against separatism”, which aimed to put an “urgent and severe remedy” against the peripheral nationalist “virus”.<sup>103</sup> In the preamble, the decree described the actions and propaganda of separatists as a one of the biggest problems of the patria that challenged the “state and people’s security”. Article 1 put under military jurisdiction all crimes against the security and unity of the Fatherland, whether verbal or written. Article 2 detailed a series of prison sentences for those propagating separatist doctrines in school and political meetings, and regulated death penalties for insurgent uprisings. In other words, in less than a week after seizing power, Primo had modified the ‘Law of Jurisdictions’ and, as demanded by the army in 1906, crimes against the nation were finally under military jurisdiction. In this, the idea of the army as the protector of the nation reached full legal status.

The “Decree against separatism” not only targeted those small groups claiming independence for Catalonia and the Basque Country. It also began a process of ‘Spanishization’ of Catalan and Basque provinces via cultural and linguistic assimilation. The decree made the use of Spanish, “the official language of the state”,

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<sup>101</sup> Ben-Ami, *Fascism*, 50.

<sup>102</sup> González Calbet, *La dictadura*, 40-41.

<sup>103</sup> “RD against separatism”, 18-9-1923, in *La Gaceta*, 19-9-1923.

compulsory in all public ceremonies of national and international character and declared it obligatory to keep the records of all provincial and municipal institutions in Castilian. Also concerned with symbolism and ceremonies, the new legislation forbade the display of regional and local flags in all public buildings and vessels, while it made compulsory the exhibition of the Spanish banner. Moreover, display of regional flags considered 'anti-Spanish', namely the Catalan, Basque and Galician ensigns, was outlawed, both in public meetings and private properties. The idea behind this legislation was not only to deprive peripheral nationalists and regionalists of their symbolism and propaganda. In effect, it granted a symbolic monopoly to Spanish nationalism in the public sphere, much in the same manner Mussolini had done by imposing the Italian national flag in all provincial and communal public offices.<sup>104</sup>

Of all the Spanish regions with alternative nationalist movements, Catalonia was by far the regime's main concern. For the *primorriveristas* Catalonia was sick with separatism and syndicalism and it needed to be cured.<sup>105</sup> As the self-styled Iron Surgeon put it, the regime's "greatest eagerness [was] that the Spanish sentiment crystallise[d] in Catalonia for its own good".<sup>106</sup> In order to fulfil this task the *primorriveristas* tried a combination of legislation, repression and nationalising policies. It is telling that just 48 hours after the coup, General Carlos Losada, Civil Governor of Barcelona, had already issued an edict ordering the display of the Spanish flag in communal public buildings and forbidding all regional and local ensigns.<sup>107</sup> On 19 September 1923, General Barrera, Captain General of Catalonia, issued yet another edict reminding the public that Spain was under martial law, which meant all crimes against national security were under military jurisdiction. Among the crimes against the fatherland the proclamation included oral or written attacks on Spain, its flag, anthem and any other national emblem, as well as mockery or disobedience of army officers and *somatenistas*.<sup>108</sup> Additionally, police officers visited bars, cafes and theatres informing managers and the public that singing *Els Segadors*, the Catalan anthem, was forbidden.<sup>109</sup> In the following months Losada and Barrera launched an indiscriminate repressive campaign against all those they

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<sup>104</sup> For the Italian case see Gentile, *The Sacralization*, 34-35.

<sup>105</sup> Villanueva, *La dictadura*, 114-115.

<sup>106</sup> Rubio, *Crónica* [1974], 126.

<sup>107</sup> Losada's edict in *La Vanguardia*, 19-9-1923.

<sup>108</sup> Barrera's edict in *La Veu*, 20-9-1923.

considered were Catalanists. Tens of cultural associations were closed down, public officers accused of being Catalanists were dismissed or jailed, and municipalities, the *Mancomunitat* and the educational system were purged by the military.<sup>110</sup>

Despite its support for the coup, the Catalan Church was considered a propagator of Catalan nationalist ideas and therefore targeted by the *primorriveristas*. After returning from his visit to Italy in December 1923, the dictator warned all those priests propagating ideas against the principles of authority and patriotism would pay a high price as they did under the Fascist government. The state, Primo threatened, would not show any weakness in dealing with these aspects.<sup>111</sup> General Emilio Barrera, a close friend of the dictator, developed the official discourse in Catalonia. He publicly warned clerics that propagating Catalanist ideas constituted a “very big sin” and called upon parishioners to manifest their contempt for those “traitors to Spain”, who “worked against the Fatherland from the pulpit”.<sup>112</sup> In fact, actions preceded Barrera’s words. On the 21 September, 1923, the *Pomells de Joventut*, Catholic youth groups of regionalist ideology controlled by the Church, were dissolved all around Catalonia. During the first weeks that followed the coup, many regionalist priests were jailed and, by the end of 1923, the dictatorship closed down the Catholic Academy of Sabadell.<sup>113</sup> In 1924, *primorriverista* actions against the Church continued apace: in February, the Capuchins of Barcelona were fined 500 pesetas for letting children hear mass with a white hood, symbol of the *Pomells de Joventut*; in June, Father Carreras, from the Catholic Academy of Sabadell, was sent into exile; in July, Father Fuster, was arrested in Gerona and fined 500 pesetas for “exceeding his religious duties”; the same month, the procession (*romeria*) to Montserrat, the shrine of Catalanism, was forbidden by the *primorriveristas*.<sup>114</sup> During the following years, the dictatorship kept up the pressure on ecclesiastical institutions and personnel, as priests continued to be arrested and exiled, ecclesiastical

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<sup>109</sup> *El Sol*, 19-9-1923.

<sup>110</sup> For the *primorriverista* repression in Catalonia see Chapter 5.

<sup>111</sup> *El Debate*, 2-12-1923.

<sup>112</sup> Barrera’s comments on Catalanist priests in *ABC*, 8-9-1924; *La Publicitat*, 27-12-1924; *La Nación*, 14-12-1925.

<sup>113</sup> Eduardo González Calleja, *El Máuser y el sufragio* [Madrid: 1999], 357.

<sup>114</sup> Enric Ucelay da Cal, “La represi3 de la Dictadura de Primo de Rivera”, in *El poder de l’Estat evoluci3, for3a o ra3* [Reus: 1993], 172.

publications censored, processions forbidden, Catholic associations closed, and teachers purged for teaching in Catalan.<sup>115</sup>

The repression of Catalan priests demonstrates the regime was determined to use the state apparatus to curb the social influence of all those it deemed “enemies of the fatherland”; even if this meant imprisonment and exile of clerics and potentially alienating the Catholic Church’s support for the Military Directory. As shown above, the *primorriveristas* developed a sacred concept of nation and welcomed the help of the Church in propagating patriotic ideas, but when the nation was perceived to be under threat from members of the clergy, then confrontation and repression became acceptable. For the *primorriveristas*, the nation was the main deity and the state the supreme political institution. The Church could co-operate in the process of nationalisation but always under the leadership and ultimate control of the state.

The supremacy of the state can also be detected in the “Decree against separatism” and the polemic that followed. The political reactions to the decree were illustrative of the dialectic between Spanish and peripheral nationalisms. Spanish nationalist groups applauded the law. *El Ejército Español* considered it showed Primo’s talent as a state leader and predicted that the decree would lead to the end of the *Mancomunitat*, as “a state within the state”.<sup>116</sup> Some sectors of the Catalan bourgeoisie became alarmed. On 30 November 1923, the President of the *Sociedad Económica Barcelonesa de Amigos del País*, Francisco Puig i Alfonso, and Catalan entrepreneurs wrote a letter to the king demanding the abolition of the decree. Puig argued that Catalan was as Spanish tongue as Castilian and, quoting Menéndez Pelayo, reminded Alfonso XIII of the futility of imposing some languages and prohibiting others.<sup>117</sup> The dictator took the matter personally and answered Puig with a public letter six days later.<sup>118</sup> In his response, Primo strongly denied that the state was persecuting the Catalan language. Moreover, he accused Catalan regionalists of discriminating against Castilian in Catalonia, especially since 1898 when “the nonsense of preaching that the Catalans had a different character than the rest of the Spaniards worsened”. It was the duty of the state, the dictator argued, to protect the

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<sup>115</sup> Roig, *La Dictadura*, 373-432; Joan Bonet i Baltà, “L’Eglèsia catalana perseguida per la Dictadura de Primo de Rivera” in Joan Bonet (ed.), *L’Eglèsia catalana* [Barcelona: 1984], 335-352.

<sup>116</sup> *El Ejército Español*, 19-9-1923. See also *La Acción*, 19-9-1923. However, Social Catholics were more cautious. *El Debate*, 19-9-1923, welcomed the law arguing it was to target separatists only and it would not compromise the regionalist policies Primo had promised to implement.

<sup>117</sup> The letter in Casassas, *La Dictadura*, 111-113.

<sup>118</sup> Primo’s letter in *El Debate*, 7-12-1923.

“common language” from those attacks and to assure that Castilian was known by all citizens. The state, the letter continued, had also the obligation of defending the symbolic representation of the nation and the indoctrination of its inhabitants. Hence, it must ban all symbols and education hostile to the nation as a way to protect the unity of the fatherland.

The promotion of Castilian as the only official tongue of the state illustrates the central role language had in Primo's conception of Spain. In April 1924, following the publication of a letter in which Madrid intellectuals expressed their support for the Catalan language, Primo was to insist in the “sovereignty of the state” to defend Castilian language from being discriminated against by Catalan institutions.<sup>119</sup> For the dictator, the duty of the “national leaders” was to make the Spanish race more homogeneous and expand the “central language”. Regional traditions should be confined to “museums and archives” insofar they were a “burden in the great unifying work of the Catholic Kings”.<sup>120</sup> Primo was resolute to fulfil his ‘mission’ and nationalise those areas of Catalonia, the Basque Country and Galicia in where Castilian was not the first language. Shortly after the promulgation of the “Decree against separatism”, the directory transmitted a Royal Order imposing compulsory education in Castilian without exceptions in the whole Spain and forbidding Catalanist schools and textbooks.<sup>121</sup> In October 1925, and again in June 1926, royal orders appeared with sanctions against teachers who propagated “antisocial and anti-Spanish doctrines in the classrooms” and taught in a language other than Castilian.<sup>122</sup> The idea behind these laws was that the promotion of regional languages led to the expansion of peripheral nationalism in an indirect way. Hence, the state had to promote education in Castilian only, so peripheral nationalists would lose the potential support of new generations. The reaction from peripheral nationalists and regionalists was hardly surprising. They took refuge in cultural activities and concentrated their efforts on the promotion of the regional languages. The teaching in Catalan, Basque, Galician became the main political demand made by the nationalist

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<sup>119</sup> Official note on regional languages, 11-4-1924, in Casa Ramos, *Dos años*, 532-533.

<sup>120</sup> Primo de Rivera, *Disertación*, 12-14.

<sup>121</sup> RO 20-10-1923, *Boletín Oficial del Ministerio de Instrucción Pública y Bellas Artes* (hereafter *BOMIP*), 16-11-1923.

<sup>122</sup> RO 13-10-1925, *BOMIP*, 20-10-1925, 522; RO 11-6-1926, *BOMIP*, 25-6-1926, 833-834.

movements, which found in their opposition to Primo's educational policies a common cause.<sup>123</sup>

## CONCLUSION: THE LIMITS OF NEGATIVE DISCOURSE

When in December 1925 Primo formed the Civil Directory, the ideological bases of National Catholicism had been laid. During his first two years in power, the dictator drew selectively from the principles of regenerationism, Maurism, Social Catholicism, and military nationalism to formulate a synthesising discourse, which turned increasingly authoritarian and centralist. In the contents of official discourse, the patria gained an unprecedented religious connotation not only at a conceptual level but also in the fields of rhetoric, public ceremonies and symbolism. This identification between fatherland and Catholicism has to be understood as part of a process of the sacralization of the nation, in which secular myths and celebrations acquired religious connotations. In an attempt to mobilise the masses on its behalf, the regime sought to monopolise patriotism and took the first steps towards the creation of a 'religion of the fatherland'.

This was not, as sometimes has been suggested, a liberal discourse nor was the Military Directory a liberal conservative dictatorship.<sup>124</sup> True, the *primorriverista* discourse incorporated some elements from nineteenth-century liberalism, such as the term 'citizen' or regenerationist rhetoric. And yet Primo took the most antidemocratic ideas of the regenerationists (the 'Iron Surgeon') and transformed the concept of citizen into a militarised patriot similar to the Fascist *cittadini soldati*. In addition to this, Primo's anti-liberal record was impressive. He declared the 1876 Constitution suspended *sine die*; closed down Parliament; declared it the duty of the state to politically indoctrinate citizens; banned political opposition; censored all criticism of the regime (it is worth remembering here that censorship was introduced in 1926 in Italy); unleashed an unprecedented and arbitrary repression which saw the imprisonment of hundreds of political opponents; left the authority of the judiciary in limbo due to the continuous personal interventions of the dictator and his political

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<sup>123</sup> Pozo & Braster, "The Rebirth", 88.

<sup>124</sup> For the alleged liberal postulates in Primo's discourse see Clive Beadman, "Official nationalism of the Primo de Rivera Regime: Some findings from the pages of *Unión Patriótica* and *Somatén*", *International Journal of Iberian Studies*, 11 (2), (1998), 74. The identification of the *primorriverista* dictatorship with conservative liberalism in Tusell and García, "La Dictadura de Primo de Rivera como régimen político", 56. See also Tusell, *Radiografía*, 270.

servants; and purged the civil service, the municipal administration and the educational system.<sup>125</sup>

In terms of strategies the *primorriverista* discourse was essentially designed to justify the dictatorship. By insisting on the various dangers threatening the fatherland, whether internal or external, Primo sought to legitimise the exceptional and illegal nature of his regime. The contents of official discourse (patriotism, social order and regeneration) had a potentially vast audience and the religious and populist tones of the discourse were designed to reach many different sectors of society. Catholic rural middle classes could easily identify with the clerical rhetoric and the religious character of the nationalist ceremony and so could non-politicised members of the lower classes well familiarised with Catholic festivals and rhetoric. Yet this close identification of Spain with Catholicism could not attract those secular urban middle classes, as proven by the outrage caused in the liberal press by the King's clerical speech in the Vatican. For these secular middle classes, the official discourse sought to offer an 'Iron Surgeon' and social order, steeped in scientific and regenerationist rhetoric. Nor could the religious tones of the *primorriverista* discourse satisfy the working class, traditionally anti-clerical and all too often repressed by the military. The best Primo could do with regard to the working class during the Military Directory was uttering a series of populist discourses that could not conceal a paternalist approach to the social question.<sup>126</sup>

By December 1925, the alliance of industrialists and landowners, the Social Catholics and the Maurists, who formed the rank and file of the UP and the *Somatén*, still fully supported the dictatorship.<sup>127</sup> Yet Primo's discourse and policies had alienated some of the political groups which initially backed the coup. Traditionalists opposed the regime's centralist policies. Intellectuals and the liberal press resented the regime's repressive measures and the perpetuation of a dictatorship which had originally claimed to be a three-month brief parenthesis.

As for the working class, those groups which in September 1923, had remained passive after the coup, by May 1925 were demanding the return to the constitutional system. In April 1925, the civil governors conducted a survey among workers' associations in all Spanish provinces enquiring about workers' demands to

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<sup>125</sup> For the repression of political opponents and the purges in the judiciary see Chapter 4. For the purges in the educational system see Chapter 5.

<sup>126</sup> Primo's manifestos to the working class in Casassas, *La dictadura*, 122, 243-268.



the government. Well co-ordinated all associations presented a similar list of petitions demanding three things in this order: first, the return to the constitutional order; second, the end of the war in Morocco; and third judicial and political accountability for those responsible for the military failures in Morocco.<sup>128</sup>

But the biggest damage in terms of the regime's popularity was felt in Catalonia where the *primorriverista* anti-Catalanist campaign was having counterproductive effects. In 1924, Calvo Sotelo observed the situation in Catalonia was worse than ever. Not only was 'separatism' on the increase but many social sectors which previously had shown contempt for the pro-independence movement were now sympathetic to Catalan nationalism. Repressive policies, Calvo Sotelo warned, were useless against "the problem of collective psychology and popular feelings".<sup>129</sup>

As many other nationalist discourses, the *primorriverista* rhetoric was intentionally vague and ill-defined seeking to reach a wide audience familiar with a series of popularised topics.<sup>130</sup> This populist strategy, based on Primo's belief that the masses' understanding was essentially simplistic, was framed as a 'negative discourse' seeking to integrate different political groups in opposition to common enemies (*caciques*, peripheral nationalists, anarchists, Rifian rebels and so on). Most of Primo's discursive strategies were devoted to legitimising the dictatorship while transforming the state structure via municipal and provincial reforms. Nevertheless, during the Military Directory the dictator maintained that the country would eventually return in one way or another to the constitutional system of 1876 – even if the creation of the state-controlled UP and the destruction of the dynastic parties indicated otherwise. The creation of the Civil Directory, characterised as a government of the UP, meant that the regime had to develop further its ideological bases. The creation of a new state required the formulation of a new ideology.

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<sup>127</sup> See Chapter 6.

<sup>128</sup> Over 100 of these petitions in AHN, Presidencia del Gobierno, Bundle 353.

<sup>129</sup> Calvo Sotelo, *Mis servicios* [1931], 68-69.

<sup>130</sup> Ben-Ami, *Fascism*, 162-164.

## CHAPTER 3. THE CIVIL DIRECTORY (1926-1930). NATIONAL CATHOLICISM AND THE NEW STATE

*"... the issue now is Fatherland or Soviets, the nation is attacked by communism, separatism and terrorism [...] peoples are now in the Communist destructive bloc or the National constructive bloc. In Spain the latter is the Unión Patriótica neither Liberal nor Conservative, but Patriotic"*

(José María Pemán)<sup>1</sup>

### INTRODUCTION

This chapter analyses the *primorrriverista* discourse during the Civil Directory. It focuses on the counterrevolutionary political message and the anti-liberal canon of Spain formulated by the UP essayists. It argues that the regime's ideologues elaborated upon the discourse of the Military Directory to create a new nationalist ideology, National Catholicism. This ideology blended vitalist and elitist philosophical principles with the myth of Catholicism as the spiritual cement of the Spanish nation. In doing this, the ideologues contributed to the creation of a National-Catholic 'political religion', in which the nation became the supreme sacred political value.

In order to gain a complete understanding of National Catholicism as a nationalist ideology, the following pages trace the various influences incorporated into the discourse of the leading figures of the regime and analyse how these beliefs were transformed to construct a new political message. The chapter explores the discourse focussing on the conceptual language used by the UP essayists, that is, the accretion of irrational meanings in their discourse, and its strategic social functions. The task of this chapter is to show how the ideologues of the regime dismantled the old liberal canon of Spanish national identity and produced a new authoritarian canon.

As in the previous chapter, methodologically this approach distinguishes between two closely interwoven dimensions: contents and strategies. Contents refer to the topics most frequently addressed by the ideologues in their discourse. Here one can make a distinction between those related to the Spanish nation (counting the

organic concept of the nation, their interpretation of history, the myth of the 'Anti-Spain', and the idea of national regeneration) and those of counterrevolutionary political nature (including the construction of the 'new state' and the role of the UP). Strategies correspond to the main social functions of the discourse, that is, the socio-political goals pursued with the official discourse. In the case of the Civil Directory it is possible to identify all three strategies in the official discourse. First, strategies of justification are to be found in the steady defence of the dictatorial rule as the only possible manner to govern Spain. Second, a strategy of transformation underlies the leading figures of the regime's attempt to transcend the liberal state structure and to construct a new authoritarian and corporative one. Third, constructive strategies can be detected in the attempt to establish a new national identity based on the Conservative-Traditionalist canon.

As in Chapter 2, this approach to the official discourse allows us to inquire not only about the regime's political ideas but also the audience the ideologues sought to reach, and the reciprocal relationship between discourse and policies. The chapter is divided into four parts. First, it discusses the emergence of the UP ideologues during the second half of the 1920s, their main doctrinal influences, and their intellectual critique of liberal principles. The second part deals with the sacred concept of the nation promoted by the regime and its ideological connotations regarding the regeneration of the fatherland, the myth of 'Anti-Spain' and peripheral nationalisms. A third section focuses on Primo's attempt to create a corporative state and the role the UP was to play in the 'new Spain'. The final section addresses the academic debate on the ideological nature of UP discourse, its position within the new European conservative thought of the 1920s and its ideological legacy to the Spanish extreme right and Franco's dictatorship.

## **THE EMERGENCE OF THE UP IDEOLOGUES AND THE ASSAULT ON LIBERALISM**

When in December 1925 Primo de Rivera formed the Civil Directory a definitive step towards the perpetuation of the dictatorship was taken. The dictator, who had announced in early November his will to change the constitutional framework and replace parliamentary democracy with a unicameral system based on

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<sup>1</sup> *Unión Patriótica*, 15-11-1929, 29.

corporative suffrage, openly oriented his regime towards an authoritarian model. The transition to civilian rule was accompanied by an attempt to reinforce the role of the UP and to endow the official party with a well-defined political doctrine. After a period of recruitment and organization, explained one of the dictatorship propagandists, the time had come “to elaborate an ideology just as Gentile did in Italy years after Mussolini had seized power.”<sup>2</sup> Thus, the emergence into the political arena of the UP ideologues in 1926 was essentially related to the dictatorship’s needs to provide the regime with a solid doctrinal base on which justify its political actions and gain mass support for the official party.

José María Pemán, José Pemartín, and Ramiro de Maeztu were the three main writers to develop the ideological tenets of the regime, both in the pages of *La Nación* and in their own books. Pemán and Pemartín were newcomers to politics and played an outstanding role in the dictatorship’s organisation and propaganda. They became what could be called the ‘organic intellectuals’ of the regime and eventually would hold key positions in Franco’s government in the late 1930s and early 1940s.<sup>3</sup> By contrast, Maeztu, a well-known journalist and intellectual, already had a well-established political career by the mid-1920s. He was a member of the Generation of 98, defended socialist views in his youth, and had turned into an authoritarian conservative during the WWI years.<sup>4</sup> During the Second Republic, all three, Pemán, Pemartín and Maeztu, were to be leading members of the extreme-right monarchist party *Renovación Española* and became regular contributors to *Acción Española*, the journal that was to play a main role in establishing the ideological bases of Francoism.

Admittedly, Primo’s ideologues did not represent the vanguard of European conservative thought in the 1920s. The central importance of late nineteenth and

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<sup>2</sup> Manuel Bueno in *La Nación*, 17-11-1925.

<sup>3</sup> On Pemán see Gonzalo Álvarez Chillida, *José María Pemán. Pensamiento y trayectoria de un monárquico (1897-1941)* [Cádiz: 1996]. On Pemartín see Alejandro Quiroga, “La idea de España en los ideólogos de Primo de Rivera. El discurso católico-fascista de José Pemartín”, in *Revista de Estudios Políticos*, n. 108, April-June 2000, 197-224. On both, Pemán and Pemartín, see Genoveva García Queipo de Llano, “Los ideólogos de la Unión Patriótica”, *Estudios Históricos* [Madrid: 1990], vol. 1, 221-230.

<sup>4</sup> On Maeztu see José Luis Villacañas, *Ramiro de Maeztu y el ideal de la burguesía española* [Madrid: 2000]; Pedro Carlos González Cuevas, *La tradición bloqueada. Tres ideas políticas en España: el primer Ramiro de Maeztu, Charles Maurras, Carl Schmitt* [Madrid: 2002]; idem, *Maeztu* [Madrid: 2003]; Alistair Hennessy, “Ramiro de Maeztu: *Hispanidad* and the search for a surrogate imperialism”, in Joseph Harrison and Alan Hoyle (eds.), *Spain’s 1898 crisis* [Manchester: 2000], 105-117; Andrés de Blas, “La ambigüedad nacionalista de Ramiro de Maeztu”, *Working Papers*, n. 71 [Barcelona: 1993],

early twentieth century Catholic traditionalism heavily conditioned their concept of the Spanish nation and the political postulates derived from it. The ideas of Menéndez Pelayo, Vázquez de Mella, Donoso Cortés and Jaime Balmes are constantly found in the writings of UP essayists. Nonetheless, it is possible to differentiate a second main current of influence in their political thought, which endowed the regime's discourse with a touch of modernity. This second trend came from the European radical right, including Italian Fascism, the monarchist *Action Française*, Portuguese *Integralismo*, and the emerging currents of irrationalist and vitalist philosophers, such as Oswald Spengler, Hippolyte Taine, Henri Bergson, and, above all, José Ortega y Gasset. It also incorporated the views of the regenerationists and those Spanish right-wing groups, which attempted to create a modern conservatism in the immediate years following WWI, such as Maurists and Social Catholics.

Both ideological streams were going to show a constant dialectic between the will to preserve 'traditional' values and the need to formulate a modern authoritarian doctrine according to what the UP essayists thought was the new European *Zeitgeist*, the spirit of the age.<sup>5</sup> Both currents were also going to endow the official discourse with a idiosyncratic language. On the one hand, the *primorriverista* was a 'baroque' discourse, passionate and powerful, designed to reach the whole society and modify actions and attitudes of every individual. This discourse was based on what some scholars have called the three 'Ps of baroque': Poetry, Purity and Patria.<sup>6</sup> The *primorriverista* discourse showed a poetic style in the sentimentalism and the hyperbole of the lyrics of texts, in which Catholic concepts of salvation, purity and redemption conveyed a sense of exclusivity and unity in the idea of the Spanish nation. This baroque discourse, in turn, appeared frequently blended with a medical vocabulary used to explain the 'illness' of Spain and the way to 'regenerate' the fatherland. This was a scientific rhetoric directly bequeathed from Social-Darwinist thought, which had often been used by both the European Right and the regenerationists in Spain and later incorporated by Primo to the dictatorship's official discourse during the Military Directory. In the period 1926-

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3-28; E. Inman Fox, "Ramiro de Maeztu y la regeneración hacia otra España", in *En torno al 98*, vol. 1, 147-159.

<sup>5</sup> On the new *Zeitgeist* see Pemartín in *La Nación*, 26-8-1926; 28-1-1927.

1930, Primo de Rivera's political lieutenants presented in their message an amalgamation of sacred and scientific 'truths', very similar to that found in the writings of Charles Maurras.<sup>7</sup> As in the French integral nationalism, this combination of religious and pseudo-scientific principles made the existence of contradictions in the *primorriverista* ideology unavoidable and endowed the official discourse with a dogmatic connotation which left little, if any, room for political discussion.

The First World War and the Russian Revolution had a profound ideological, social and economic impact in Spain.<sup>8</sup> The ideologues of the regime correctly realised Spain was not an exception to the European political convulsions of the post-war era. In their view, the main lesson of the Great War was the end of liberalism as a valid political system and the necessity to formulate a modern political doctrine.<sup>9</sup> The group of ideas, beliefs, values, and images that constitute National Catholicism was the UP essayists ideological response to the 1920s European socio-political crisis of modernisation. National Catholicism, it will be argued here, was not a purely anti-modern ideology, but rather one in a constant dialogue with modernity which attempted to filter those aspects of the new times considered positive.

Discrediting liberalism was the major contribution of the regime's ideologues to Spanish right-wing thought. Philosophically, Primo's propagandists argued, the twentieth century had brought to an end "rationalism, individualism, and all those universalistic perceptions of human equality" that had guided liberal political postulates in the nineteenth century. Pemartín, who had been a pupil of the vitalist philosopher Henry Bergson in Paris, considered that Kantian rationalism and liberal individualism symbolised "the past, the era that, whether we wanted or not, has ended." The new stream in philosophy was in his view represented by Oswald Spengler, José Ortega y Gasset and, of course, Bergson, whose works showed the world was entering into "the field of intuition, action, and vitalism".<sup>10</sup> Maeztu was

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<sup>6</sup> For the concept of 'baroque' discourse used by *Falange* during the Second Republic and Franco's regime see Mercedes Carbayo-Abengózar, "Shaping women: national identity through the use of language in Franco's Spain", *Nations and Nationalism*, 7 (1), 2001, 77-78.

<sup>7</sup> For this combination see Andrés de Blas, *Nacionalismos y naciones en Europa* [Madrid: 1994], 57.

<sup>8</sup> On the impact of WWI in Spain see Francisco J. Romero Salvadó, *Spain 1914-1918. Between War and Revolution* [London: 1999].

<sup>9</sup> Pemartín in *La Nación*, 28-1-1927.

<sup>10</sup> *La Nación*, 14-6-1927.

on a par with this philosophical approach. He considered valour and discipline as fundamental values in the modern man and, based on Nietzsche's ideas, advocated complementing "rationalist activities" with "sentimental and intuitive ones."<sup>11</sup>

This philosophical critique of rationalism had a clear political goal. According to Pemartín, the importance of the new philosophy lay in the fact that it had paved the way for a "new political ideology." The first principle of this ideology was "a great and universal negation; the negation of nineteenth-century general and abstract political forms: Universal suffrage, Parliamentarism."<sup>12</sup> Maeztu also saw contemporary French and German philosophy was leading to new political doctrines. In *La Nación* he wrote: "A new philosophy requires the renovation of political ideas. Liberalism is leaving. Collectivism is accompanying it. Something different is beginning to take shape."<sup>13</sup> The Basque intellectual identified Fascism, the works of Charles Maurras, Henri Massis, Antonio Sardinha (the father of Portuguese *Integralismo*), Corradini and, not very modestly, his own writings as the vanguard of the 1920s political thought.<sup>14</sup>

Liberalism was not only a senile creed; it also opened the gates to the establishment of a communist society, according to the National-Catholic theorists. In their bipolar conception of the world, liberal democracy aligned with socialism, communism, and anarchism. Maeztu held liberalism "responsible" for the rise of class struggle (and "separatism" in the Spanish case), because, in the name of individual liberty, it had tolerated the destruction of national "social unity". This, he predicted, would eventually "lead to social revolution and civil war".<sup>15</sup> Pemartín pushed the argument further and tried to prove that liberal democracy "logically" and "inevitably" led to communism, via universal suffrage. The Andalusian philosopher sustained that after the French Revolution established the "dogmas" of the Rights of Man and universal franchise the people was empowered to overthrow "traditional, historical, social, and economic values, which were qualitative" by definition.<sup>16</sup> If free elections were to be held in Spain, the triumph of the left

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<sup>11</sup> *El Sol*, 29-4-1924.

<sup>12</sup> *La Nación*, 28-1-1927; 31-1-1927.

<sup>13</sup> *La Nación*, 28-4-1927.

<sup>14</sup> *La Nación*, 28-4-1927; 5-5-1927; 28-7-1927; 3-11-1927; 8-12-1927.

<sup>15</sup> *La Nación*, 12-7-1927.

<sup>16</sup> *La Nación*, 11-3-1927.

ultimately would impose a communist regime. After all, the Russian Revolution was just a “direct descendant” of the French one.<sup>17</sup>

In presenting democracy as the route to communism Pemartín anticipated one of the favourite arguments of all groups of the Spanish extreme right in the 1930s.<sup>18</sup> This stance also means a turning point for the Spanish right. While conservative groups, like the Social Catholics, had attacked the corrupt implementation of liberal principles and the low level of democratic representation during the Restoration, here these very principles were at stake from a doctrinal viewpoint. According to the *primorrriverista* view, the return to the constitutional framework of 1876 that many in the Right were demanding of the dictator would ultimately lead to the destruction of the nation.

## **DOGMAS OF THE NATIONAL CATHOLIC CANON**

### **The sacred concept of the nation and the interpretation of history**

Primo's ideologues propagated an organic concept of the nation based on the traditionalist theory of society and proclaimed Catholicism to be intrinsic to the Spanish soul or ‘race’. According to Pemán, who acknowledged that Vázquez de Mella had inspired his model, the nation was “the live organism formed by men when they gather in society.”<sup>19</sup> The creation of the nation was considered the last step in a historical process of cohesion in which “natural societies”, like the family, the municipality, and the region had evolved and congregated to bring into being the fatherland.<sup>20</sup> From its very conception the National Catholic idea of nation was endowed with an organic character and directly confronted nineteenth century liberal individualism, which, in Pemán's view, represented society as a “shapeless aggregation of individuals.”<sup>21</sup>

The specific character in the formation of nations was found in the key role played by religion in European history. Pemartín also argued that the nation was “a creation of Christianity” and the Ancient world had not witnessed them because it “lacked the moral unity of beliefs that would have allowed their emergence”. Nations, he explained, need a “moral unity”, a spiritual element above “all the

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<sup>17</sup> *La Nación*, 5-7-1927.

<sup>18</sup> García Queipo de Llano, “Los ideólogos de la Unión Patriótica”, 229.

<sup>19</sup> José María Pemán, *El hecho y la idea de la Unión Patriótica* [Madrid: 1929], 71-72.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid*, 72.

<sup>21</sup> *La Nación*, 19-9-1928.



geographical, ethnic, philosophical, and historical factors [...] to be unified.”<sup>22</sup> Historically Spain had been the best example of that creative influence and Catholicism was portrayed as the core of the nation and the element that defined Spanish identity. The reign of the Catholic Kings at the end of the fifteenth century was pointed out as the era in which religion had completed the formation of the Spanish nation.<sup>23</sup>

Primo’s ideologues’ interpretation of the Spanish nation was heavily influenced by the Catholic traditionalist historiography of the second half of the nineteenth century. Traditionalist historians explained the pinnacle of Spanish power in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries as a consequence of the struggle against foreign heresy in Europe and the evangelisation of the Americas. They also blamed French rationalism and German Krausism for the artificial introduction of revolutionary ideas that had supposedly destroyed the unity of Spanish culture. In the same vein, the luminaries of the regime argued that the penetration of “foreign” enlightened and liberal ideas had clashed with the “intimate social essence” of Spain and had led to a “shameful decadence.”<sup>24</sup> Their providential view of Spanish history exalted the same historical characters, facts, and periods as the Traditionalists. The Catholic Kings, the discovery and colonisation of the Americas, the European empire of the Habsburgs and the battle of Lepanto against the Ottomans were portrayed as the supreme expression of the Spanish *Volkgeist* in a extremely oversimplified way. These historical characters and events were presented in a mythological manner as absolute ‘good’, without negative aspects. Historical characters and events were turned into non-temporal constants, the pure incarnation of the national character, as opposed to the Reformation, the Enlightenment and liberal revolutions, all of them considered intrinsically anti-Catholic and, therefore, anti-Spanish.<sup>25</sup> As was the case in pre-fascist and fascist ideologies during the first two decades of the century, myths were to play a dominant role in the UP discourse.

The *primorriverista* view of history was saturated by religious concepts of purity, sin and redemption, which reinforced the nation’s sacred value. Studies of extreme right discourse have shown that the function of this language is to endow

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<sup>22</sup> Pemartín, *Los valores*, 42-43.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, 43-44.

<sup>24</sup> Pemartín in *La Nación*, 30-9-1927.

<sup>25</sup> Some examples of this mythological views of history in Péman, *El hecho*, 331-332, 350-351; and *La Nación*, 31-8-1928; Pemartín, in *La Nación*, 16-5-1928; and *Los valores*, 70-71.

the message with an authority that cannot be challenged. Thus religious arguments in political discourse turn into 'evidence'. They are presented to the audience as if they were intrinsically true, with no need to verify them.<sup>26</sup> In the same way, the regime's propagandists presented the religious interpretation of Spanish history as unquestionable 'proof' of the Catholic nature of the nation. The ideas were not new but the targeted audience was wider than ever before. This religious language and sacred view of Spanish history was familiar not only to those supporters of traditionalist groups but also to a broad spectrum of the Right, including Social Catholics and important sectors of the Conservative party who had incorporated these ideological premises during the revival of Catholic movements of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century.<sup>27</sup> Thus the audience that could identify with the official interpretation of history embraced all the most relevant groups of the Right.

Traditionalist interpretations were complemented with vitalist views of history and the Generation of 1898's idea of the existence of a Spanish 'national essence' developed through the centuries. Primo's ideologues were deeply influenced by Oswald Spengler's understanding of history as "a whole of enormous vital cycles based on a series of constants."<sup>28</sup> The German philosopher argued in *The Decline of the West* that this series of constants could be drawn out of analogies of the diverse historical periods which ultimately elucidated the rise and fall of civilisations.<sup>29</sup> Moreover, Spengler interpreted the crisis of liberalism and WWI as a turning point for western civilisation. He explained western decadence by stressing the lack of aristocratic and heroic values in the liberal system and foresaw a new era of strong political leaders as the only solution to save Europe from barbarism.

This irrational interpretation of history and the crisis of liberalism became extremely influential among Nazi theorists and was eventually extensively supported by the Spanish extreme right in the 1930s.<sup>30</sup> Primo's ideologues

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<sup>26</sup> Maryse Souchard et al., *Le Pen. Les mots. Analyse d'un discours d'extrême-droite* [Paris: 1997], 22-25.

<sup>27</sup> María Victoria López-Cordón, "La mentalidad conservadora durante la Restauración", in García Delgado (ed.), *La España de la Restauración* [Madrid: 1985], 71-108.

<sup>28</sup> Spengler's work first volume was published in 1918 and the second volume came in 1922. In Spain, the first translation of the two volumes was published in 1923 including a preface by Ortega. I quote from the Spanish edition *La decadencia de Occidente* [Madrid: 1976], 25.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, 18-28.

<sup>30</sup> For the influence of Spengler in the Spanish extreme right in the 1930s see Morodo, *Acción Española*, 114-116.

anticipated the use of Spengler's views and provided an explanation of both the "essences" of the Spanish nation and the authoritarian regimes of the 1920s based on the ideas of the German philosopher. Pemartín directly applied Spengler's interpretation of history to explore, via similes and comparisons, those outstanding "essences" in the Spanish past and, consequently, the sum and substance of the nation. He resolved that religion and monarchy had been the constant "traditional essences" in Spanish history.<sup>31</sup> The latter represented the political institution on which the nation had been constructed and its value lay in its role as saviour during political crisis. Religion was considered the "barometer" of what was genuinely Spanish. In other words, religion was able to tell "the substantial from the superficial, what will succeed in our historical evolution from what will remain as something parasitical."<sup>32</sup> From this basis the reading of Spanish history was made in a simplistic way. Those periods of national grandeur were due to the pre-eminence of national essences, while the decadence of Spain was blamed on the introduction of "foreign ideas", such as liberalism.<sup>33</sup>

The UP essayist added to this view the definition of a Spanish spiritual character put forward by the Generation of 1898 the previous decades. They mainly relied on Ángel Ganivet's *Idearium Español* to define a particular Spanish collective psychology. Ganivet, a diplomat and journalist, had published *Idearium Español* in 1896. The book was a regenerationist study concerned with 'the problem of Spain'. Like many other authors of the 1890s, Ganivet believed that the understanding of Spanish decadence lay in the discovery of the "natural constitution of the race."<sup>34</sup> Unlike many of his Europeanist contemporaries, Ganivet insisted that regeneration lay in purification of the national essence and adherence to tradition.<sup>35</sup> Although *Idearium* was a complex book, Primo's ideologues managed to present it in a simplistic way and stressed those aspects of the work that defined the spiritual character of Spaniards as essentially Catholic.<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> Pemartín, *Los valores*, 27-28.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, 320.

<sup>33</sup> Spengler's interpretation of history was also heavily influential in Pemán's explanation of European civilization. See *El hecho*, 331-332, 350-351. The influence of Spengler in Pemán, via his mentor Eugenio D'Ors, in Álvarez Chillida, *Pemán*, 209-217.

<sup>34</sup> Ángel Ganivet, *Idearium Español* [Madrid, 1996], 37.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, 112, 133-134.

<sup>36</sup> Pemartín, *Los valores*, 42.

But the use of Ganivet's ideas went far beyond mere similarities with the traditionalists. The *primorriveristas* shared Ganivet's determinist assertion of the existence of a "territorial spirit", consequence of the peninsular geography of Spain and its history, which endowed Spaniards with an "independent character" and differentiated them from the rest of Europe.<sup>37</sup> This pseudo-scientific concept of "territorial spirit", based on the works of Henry Buckle and Hippolyte Taine, emphasized the relationship between history of civilizations and their environments and had been influential in France at the turn of the century to define national characters.<sup>38</sup> Ganivet considered Spanish character as a martial, stoical, intuitive, bellicose and spiritual one, but also depicted the Spaniards' psychology as "lethargic" (*abúlica*) and claimed that national regeneration lay in the purification of the Spanish essence.<sup>39</sup> Pemán and Pemartín went, however, a step beyond Ganivet's geographical determinism and presented a Spanish individualist psychology with some negative connotations of particularism, which acted in opposition to national consolidation. Hence, they argued the necessity of a strong government, a dictatorship, for the regeneration of the nation and, once again, attacked liberalism and democracy as unsuitable to the Spanish character.<sup>40</sup>

It is easy to discern here the importance of the Social-Darwinist thought in Primo's ideologues. Linked to the use of a religious rhetoric, the application of pseudo-scientific analysis and psycho-medical language to describe the nation as a living organism shows that there was a need to present the concept of Spain on natural science and deterministic grounds. In doing so the UP luminaries endowed their discourse with a 'scientific-religious' dogmatism, similar to that found in their much-admired Charles Maurras.<sup>41</sup> The political implications of the discourse were also akin. Like the French monarchist, using providentialist, idealist and vitalist interpretations of history, Primo's leading ideologues framed an organic concept of the fatherland in which the 'people' played no significant role in the formation and development of the nation. Unlike the liberal canon of the fatherland, Spaniards became a passive object on whom the 'national essences' were projected throughout history. Individuals were shown as merely part of an integral organic whole guided

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<sup>37</sup> Ganivet, *Idearium*, 56.

<sup>38</sup> Fox, *La Invención*, 125.

<sup>39</sup> Ganivet, *Idearium*, 139, 142-143.

<sup>40</sup> Pemán, *El hecho*, 245; Pemartín in, *La Nación*, 10-12-1926; 30-11-1927.

by superior and divine historical forces. As was the case in Gentile's Fascist political philosophy, and earlier in the writings of Maurice Barrès, the Primo luminaries' approach to the nation led to the absolute subordination of the individual to the collective spiritual body.<sup>42</sup> Like French integral nationalism and Italian Fascism, National Catholicism attacked the idea of a plural society as a handicap to the spiritual union of the nation. Like its European counterparts, National Catholicism would turn against the 'enemy within' as the main element to define itself.

### The myth of Anti-Spain

The connotations of the official concept of the nation as a living organism has to be understood within Primo's ideologues' tendency to present all political struggles as bipolar fights. In their view, the 1920s were witnessing "the great world revolution" against liberalism and communism led by the principles of "nation" and "order".<sup>43</sup> Fascist Italy, Spain under the UP, and Germany with the emergence of nationalist groups were different manifestations of the same phenomenon of formation of "national blocs against communism".<sup>44</sup> In the new contest the world was divided into "national alliances and soviet alliances".<sup>45</sup> The duality of the 1920s was clearly underlined by Maeztu: "Civilization on the one hand; Bolshevism on the other. This is question of the present time".<sup>46</sup> In the future, Pemán foresaw, the masses would be either "Christian or Anarchic", different liberal political nuances were out of question, it was time to choose "between Jesus and Barabbas"<sup>47</sup>

This dualistic vision of the world political situation had its domestic version in the myth of the two Spains. The UP essayist defended the existence of a "real Spain", represented by the Catholic working masses "as the nerve of the Nation", opposed to the 'Anti-Spain', a miscellany of liberals, socialists, republicans, communists, anarchists, regionalists and Catalan and Basque nationalists, who continuously threatened the essences of the nation. To be sure, the theory of the 'two

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<sup>41</sup> On Maurras' see Michel Winock, *Nationalisme, antisémitisme et fascisme en France* [Paris: 1990], 21-23.

<sup>42</sup> For Pemartín, the nation was a natural being superior not merely to "the individual will" but also "to the collective will of some generations.", *Los valores*, 97. For the influence of Barrès and the idea of "the deaths commanding the nation's character" see Emilio Rodríguez Tarduchy, *Psicología del Dictador* [Madrid: 1929], 44.

<sup>43</sup> Péman *El hecho*, 107-108.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, 112-114.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*, 105.

<sup>46</sup> *La Nación*, 10-2-1927.

Spains' was not invented by the dictatorship's ideologues, yet the *primorriverista* treatment of the concept integrated its different versions transforming and renovating the myth into its modern form.

As mentioned in Chapter 1, the myth of the two Spains can be traced back to the early nineteenth century. Then reactionary priests identified the fatherland with orthodox Catholicism and absolutist traditions, while they considered enlightened and liberal ideas as anti-Spanish.<sup>47</sup> These postulates were consistent with an Augustinian conception of history in which the forces of Good (the "real Spain") fought an eternal battle against the forces of Evil (Anti-Spain) and showed the essential appeal of mythical rather than rational argumentation for the ultramontane right.<sup>48</sup> The idea of the two Spains is present throughout the nineteenth century both in historiography and political discourses. By the end of the nineteenth century and early twentieth the works of Menéndez Pelayo had renewed the division of Spain between 'foreign' and 'traditional', 'orthodox' and 'heterodox', historical legacies; while the doctrine of Carlists and Catholic Integrists had also kept alive the myths of 'Anti-Spain' and the 'internal enemy' in the political arena.<sup>49</sup>

The second depiction of a divided nation came from a very different political field. As a consequence of the Restoration political system, based on the planned alternation in power of the two dynastic parties, the dissociation between 'representatives' and 'represented' soon emerged. This caused a conceptual separation between the 'real' and the 'official' Spain.<sup>50</sup> By the 1880s, republicans and Catalan regionalists distinguished an "official" from a "working" Spain in their political discourses. But it was not until 1898 when the Costa brought to the public opinion the image of a "real" Spain confronting the "official" one and the concept became widely known. As had been the case in France and Italy, he used the image of the "real" versus the "official" nation to denounce the manipulation of the electoral system and demanded an iron surgeon "to equate the legal with the real

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<sup>47</sup> Péman, *El hecho*, 121, 308-309.

<sup>48</sup> José Luis Abellán, "La persistencia de la 'Mentalidad inquisitorial' en la vida cultural española y la teoría de las 'dos Españas'", in A. Alcalá (ed.), *Inquisición española y mentalidad inquisitorial* [Barcelona: 1984], 544-545.

<sup>49</sup> Carmen López Alonso, "El pensamiento conservador español en el siglo XIX: de Cádiz a la Restauración", in F. Vallespín (ed.), *Historia de la teoría política*, vol. 5, [Madrid: 1993], 275-277; José Luis Rodríguez Jiménez, *La extrema derecha española en el siglo XX* [Madrid: 1997], 23.

<sup>50</sup> See, for example, Juan Vázquez de Mella, *Obras completas del Excelentísimo señor Vázquez de Mella y Fanjul*, [Madrid: 1932] vol.25, 97. For the Catholic Integrists view of the internal enemy see, for instance, *El Siglo Futuro*, 17-6-1898.

Spain”.<sup>52</sup> In the 1910s, the philosopher Ortega y Gasset went a step beyond, declaring the existence of “two non-communicating and incompatible Spains”. His vitalist approach distinguished then a “new Spain”, which had the power to transform society confronting a “decrepit Spain” represented by the political oligarchy.<sup>53</sup>

Primo’s ideologues’ main contribution to the theory of the “two Spains” was to blend the traditionalist and the regenerationist currents, albeit in a very approximate manner. The *primorriveristas* represented the “real” Spain as traditional and modern at the same time, whilst Anti-Spain became both the “heterodox” and “foreign” ideologies and the “decrepit” and oligarchic Restoration system. On the one hand, the “real” Spain was the “historic Spain” that was defined by religious and monarchical values, as in the case of the nineteenth century reactionaries. On the other, the real Spain was the “vital Spain”, depicted as the great masses of working, modern Spaniards who made the country progress. Vital Spain was the “vast majority of the common people” who had stayed away from the old political system. They symbolised nothing less than the “nerve of the nation”.<sup>54</sup> Consequently, the “real” Spain acquired a modern, regenerationist, inter-class connotation. The *primorriverista* discourse gained clear populist tones seeking support from those middle and lower-middle classes which had felt alienated from the oligarchic Restoration system: the dictatorship followed the search for the “neutral mass” that the Maurists had began in the 1910s.

It is in the metaphorical struggle between the “real Spain” and “Anti-Spain” where the influence of a medical language and the strategic functions of the official discourse can be best detected. Firstly, the political parties of the Restoration were presented as the “virus” that had infected the nation. Inside the same living organism, Pemartín diagnosed quoting Ortega, was the “cancer” of that “false and usurper nation [...] that was killing the real and genuine nation.” In 1923, he added, the Army, “led by the Marquis of Estella but supported and encouraged by the whole people, in a bottom up movement of national extension,” acted as the “anti-fiction, the anti-toxin of that fictitious and official Spain [...], which usurped and

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<sup>51</sup> Miguel Artola, “El sistema político de la Restauración”, in *La España de la Restauración*, 15-16.

<sup>52</sup> Vicente Cacho Viu, “La imagen de las dos Españas”, *Revista de Occidente*, May 1986, n. 60, 54-55.

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*, 71-72.

<sup>54</sup> Among many examples see Pemán, *El Hecho*, 28-29; Pemartín, *Los valores*, 105-106; Rodríguez Tarduchy, *Psicología*, 179.

dominate the rest of the nation.” The Army was thus depicted as the saviour of the patria and the destruction of the Anti-Spain presented as vital for the regeneration of the real nation.<sup>55</sup> Therefore, this sort of discourse performed the function of legitimising both the coup and the dictatorship by linking the army to the national will and portraying the military as the last resort for the salvation of the nation.

Secondly, the official message was to be governed by what analysts of political discourses have named the principle of the “ideological square”, that is, of positive self-presentation and negative other-representation.<sup>56</sup> Language determined here the concept of the “internal enemy” in pathological terms to contribute to the legitimisation of the regime and the de-legitimisation of the political opponents. The UP essayists blurred the ideological distinctions among liberals, republicans, socialists, communists, anarchists and peripheral nationalists and portrayed all political adversaries as a united whole: the Anti-Spain. This mythological figure not only opposed to the “national essences” and worked to destroy the fatherland, but was also described as conglomerate of incurable ill people. From Pemartín’s viewpoint those supporting democratic and leftwing ideas were “drugged dogmatics”, “mentally sick people, [who] had no cure.”<sup>57</sup> To Maeztu, who also liked to use the “cancer” metaphor to refer to the “enemies of the fatherland”, socialists had “turbulent and confused minds which prefer passion to truth and step by step were incubating a profound hatred against intelligence”<sup>58</sup>

This characterisation of the “internal enemy” in such terms was mainly a process of de-humanisation of the political opponents. In doing so, the official discourse aimed to legitimate coercion and violence against all those opposed to the dictatorship. The discourse directly connected here with the political repression that the regime was carrying on those years.<sup>59</sup> Maeztu put it in a crude and blatant way: the nature of Bolshevism was nothing but “the revolt of the sub-human being against civilisation”. Hence, it made no sense to negotiate with Bolsheviks because their “resentful and sick souls” would not understand the reality of the world. The

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<sup>55</sup> Pemartín, *Los valores*, 105-106.

<sup>56</sup> For the principle of ideological square see Teun A. Van Dijk, “Discourse as Interaction in Society”, in Teun A. Van Dijk (ed.), *Discourse as Social Interaction*, vol. 2 [London: 1992], 31-34.

<sup>57</sup> Pemartín, *Los valores*, 644-645.

<sup>58</sup> *La Nación*, 24-2-1927; 24-3-1927.

<sup>59</sup> For the repressive measures of the regime against its political opponents see Chapters 4, 5 and 6.



solutions were plain: “Against Bolshevism, the Dictatorship! Against subversion, the bayonets!”<sup>60</sup>

The myth of Anti-Spain was often presented together with the idea of a universal plot against Spain. Behind the internal and external opponents to the dictatorship, the official press insisted, there were obscure forces conspiring against the fatherland. The Soviet government was ultimately held responsible for the actions anti-Spaniards of all types, according to the regime’s propagandists.<sup>61</sup> The social protests of the years 1917-1920, *Rifian* resistance, peripheral nationalists and anarchist actions... virtually every movement of opposition was regarded as controlled in the shadows by Moscow, in what has to be considered as the institutionalisation of the “Bolshevik threat” by the *primorriverista* regime.<sup>62</sup> As in French integral nationalism, the resort to a Masonic-Marxist-democratic plot was wrapped in providential vocabulary and presented an apocalyptic picture of the world.<sup>63</sup> In providing this threatening vision of the global political situation, the aim of this sort of discourse was to create a sensation of insecurity in the audience. At the same time, the discourse allowed the representation of the dictatorship as the only possible solution for Spain. Just as Mussolini had done in Italy before seizing power in 1922, the *primorriverista* discourse portrayed all political parties as incompetent, unable to stop the working class and responsible for the social unrest; whilst the UP was meant to aggregate the “real” national forces and prevent the rise of the Left.

The function of political myths is to offer simplistic and therefore distorted, but also a readily, easy-to-assimilate version, of complex social and political realities, avoiding rational explanations and drawing a neat division between two sides. Like many other extreme right European theoreticians when dealing with “internal enemies”, the regime’s spokesmen delivered a simplified, mythical, bipolar message, which facilitated an easy assimilation by the masses of a more complex world.<sup>64</sup> Since the negative symbol of Anti-Spain portrayed the enemy as a whole ultimately controlled by obscure forces in Moscow, the middle classes were then

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<sup>60</sup> *La Nación*, 24-2-1927; 28-2-1927.

<sup>61</sup> Pemán, *El Hecho*, 106.

<sup>62</sup> See, for instance, Maeztu in *La Nación*, 16-5-1927; Pemán in *La Nación*, 20-9-1928; and *El hecho*, 109.

<sup>63</sup> Peter Davies, “Providence, Saviour Figures, and Would-be Gods: Prophecy and the French Extreme Right” in Taithe & Thornton (ed.), *Prophecy* [Stroud: 1997], 181-201.

<sup>64</sup> Winock, *Nationalisme*, 19-22, 152.

provided with a simple explanation in religious and pathological terms about the deep socio-political changes in Europe since WWI.

The use of political myths also aims to integrate the audience into a certain political community and to mobilise supporters. Political myths are especially powerful in times of socio-political crises when they become dominant in popular mentalities and occasionally even among intellectuals.<sup>65</sup> In this sense, the regime's employment of the mythological figure of Anti-Spain and its parallel legend of the Masonic-Communist international plot clearly sought to mobilise support for the dictatorship. However, the regime faced a serious paradox that certainly diminished the impact of the utilization of the myth of Anti-Spain in the audience. On the one hand, the institutionalisation of the "Bolshevist threat" and the idea of the "enemy within" could have potentially appealed to a large section of the middle and upper classes, which had been terrified of the social unrest that preceded the dictatorship. On the other hand, the official discourse steadily emphasized that the main achievement of the new regime had precisely been to end that social unrest and to deliver "order" and discipline to the country. The "success" of the dictatorship in dismantling and repressing organised labour seems to have convinced the bourgeoisie that the military were the proper instrument to control the working class and that the crisis of the years 1917-1923 was finally over. Under the dictatorship, the bourgeoisie did not feel the country was suffering a socio-political crisis and, therefore, the appeal of the myths of Anti-Spain and the Masonic-democratic-Marxist conspiracy was severely reduced and their ability to politically mobilise sectors of the middle and upper classes decreased. The lack of perception of a political crisis and the economic boom of the 1920s would partially explain the failure of the myth of Anti-Spain had to gather together larger sectors of the population around the UP, as opposed to the power of mobilisation the same myth would eventually have during the Second Republic and the Civil War.<sup>66</sup>

### **The nation and the regionalist question**

National-Catholicism gained momentum when confronted with Catalan and Basque nationalism. The peripheral challenge to the official concept of Spain turned

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<sup>65</sup> Manuel García Pelayo, *Los mitos políticos* [Madrid: 1981], 18-23.

Catalonian and Basque nationalists into the paradigmatic representation of the 'internal enemy' and the ideologues of the regime raised the question of the unity of Spain as a core principle in their political discourse. Their centralist, unitarian and repressive position towards regionalism and peripheral nationalism has to be understood within the context of a dialectical relationship established between Spanish nationalism, on the one hand, and peripheral nationalisms on the other. In addition, the ideologues' postulates can be seen as an *ad hoc* attempt to elaborate an ideological cover for the repressive policies against peripheral nationalists and regionalists that the dictatorship had been implemented since September 1923.

The *primorriverista* intelligentsia (a term that I use in a descriptive sense rather than as a qualitative evaluation) defended the unity of Spain on geographical, linguistic, legal, religious and historical terms and steadily attacked the arguments of peripheral nationalists.<sup>67</sup> This defence of the unity of Spain was obviously not a mere intellectual quarrel on the nature of the nation but aimed to discredit peripheral nationalism as an artificial political creation.<sup>68</sup> Primo de Rivera ideologues repeatedly argued that the emergence of peripheral nationalism was nothing but another manifestation of the "disease" the Restoration system had brought to Spain.<sup>69</sup> This view, that may be already found in Maeztu during the first months of the dictatorship, maintained that liberties were used to destroy "national consciousness" and accused the liberal system of paving the way for the "balkanization" of Spain.<sup>70</sup> If regional claims had survived the Restoration it was only because they "were fuelled with [liberal] political goals" to undermine the dictatorship.<sup>71</sup>

The same Manichean, Good-Evil rationale of the 'enemy within' can be detected here. In linking peripheral nationalism to the liberal system, the UP essayists blurred the distinctions between regionalism, nationalism and separatism and showed them as a unified whole of opposition to the fatherland.

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<sup>66</sup> On the use of the myth of Anti-Spain by the rebels during the Civil War see Alberto Reig Tapia, "La justificación ideológica del *alzamiento* de 1936" in García Delgado (ed.), *Bienio rectificador y Frente Popular* [Madrid: 1988], 211-237.

<sup>67</sup> In his book *El hecho y la idea de la Unión Patriótica*, Pemán devoted two chapters to explain the emergence of peripheral nationalism and refuted its arguments on the grounds of a common religion, language and legal tradition. *El hecho*, 235-255.

<sup>68</sup> See *ibid.*, 242 and José Pemartín, *Los valores*, 97-98.

<sup>69</sup> See, for example, Pemán, *El hecho*, 176-177, 247-252; Ramiro de Maeztu in *La Nación*, 24-3-1927.

<sup>70</sup> "El ejército en España y el peligro de la 'balcanización'", *La Prensa*, Buenos Aires, 4-11-1923, *La Nación*, 18-9-1923, in Ramiro de Maeztu, *Con el Directorio Militar* [Madrid: 1957], 11-21, 33-38.

Notwithstanding their acknowledgement of a “good regionalism” in the past, always depicted in cultural and pseudo-folkloric terms, they considered the “poison” of politics had turned it into a “nationalist heresy” and, therefore, had to be suppressed.<sup>72</sup>

More importantly, Primo’s theorists intentionally portrayed the rise of nationalist claims as related to the problems of ‘social disorder’ during the years preceding the dictatorship. Their discourse presented peripheral nationalist demands and the actions of anarcho-syndicalists, socialists, republicans and communists against the establishment as the two sides of a single problem that had threatened the unity of the nation.<sup>73</sup> Maeztu put it in very plain terms. Peripheral nationalism and class struggle were a “cancer” in Spain, both originating in the nineteenth century through liberalism and tolerated by the Restoration.<sup>74</sup> Furthermore, he accused the USSR of plotting against Spain and financing all Catalan separatists, anarcho-syndicalists and the Moroccan rebels of the Rif, via the French Communist Party.<sup>75</sup> This approach deliberately overlooked the significant ideological, political and social differences between peripheral nationalisms, which were principally conservative movements in the 1920s, and the Left in, order to present them all together as enemies of the fatherland. Thus, regional political claims were equated with social disorder and the defence of Spain became also the defence of the social order.

Repression from the state and a centralist organisation of the country were the two main measures proposed by the ideologues to combat the “separatist problem”. As Primo himself had proclaimed the state had “the duty to confront anyone harming the unity of the fatherland” and no middle ways would be used to ensure the “oneness of the nation.”<sup>76</sup> As the ideologues of the regime acknowledged, the regime had to base its policies on a “forthright and prompt repression of all separatism and disrespect for the common Fatherland.”<sup>77</sup> This repressive measure had to be complemented with “the development of an intensive provincial policy”,

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<sup>71</sup> José Pemartín, *Los valores*, 99.

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.*, 101.

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*, 100. See also Pemán using Maurras ideas to present republican values as “disintegrating” the nation in *El hecho*, 321.

<sup>74</sup> *La Nación*, 24-3-1927.

<sup>75</sup> *La Nación*, 16-5-1927; 19-5-1927.

<sup>76</sup> Primo de Rivera, *El pensamiento*, 94, 109.

<sup>77</sup> Pemán, *El hecho*, 251.

as opposed to a regional one.<sup>78</sup> The official discourse, in this case, combined the attack against the political opponent with the justification of governmental policies *a posteriori*.

The regime's repressive reaction was the quintessential one of a dominant nation-state when facing the emergence of a different nationalism within its boundaries. In these cases nationalist agitators of a non-independent country are accused of inventing artificial problems. At the same time, that particular region is punished with mistrust and sanctions, which ultimately consolidate those alleged artificial problems and reinforce the phenomenon which its mere existence was denied.<sup>79</sup> In fact, this was exactly the case in Catalonia and to a lesser extent the Basque provinces, where *primorriverista* repression led to the reinforcement of nationalist tendencies and the emergence of a popular nationalist Left in Catalonia. Moreover, the repression aligned Spanish Republicans, Socialists and Catalan nationalists in their fight for a democratic republic.<sup>80</sup> The association between the Left and peripheral nationalism that the *primorriverista* ideologues denounced was in fact the outcome of the dictatorial policies.

Finally, it is essential to stress that by the end of the 1920s the UP posture regarding regionalism constituted an abrupt ideological breach with the views of Carlist and Catholic Integrists. Not surprisingly, at the beginning of the dictatorship Vázquez de Mella had complained about the centralism of Primo and advocated the political rights of the regions, while in April 1925, Don Jaime, the Carlist pretender, had denounced the dictatorship's attacks to regionalism as "unjustifiable" and "violent" and proclaimed himself the champion of regional freedoms.<sup>81</sup> During the Civil Directory, new problems arose between the Traditionalists and the government, again on the regionalist issue. In January 1928, Victor Pradera, one of the leaders and the main ideologue of the Traditionalists after the death of Vázquez de Mella, accused Primo's centralist policies of having a negative effect. In a debate at the National Assembly, Pradera told the dictator his repressive approach to the regional question was in fact fostering peripheral nationalism and advocated the political representation of the regions. Primo's reply was categorical. First he firmly denied the accusations. Then he blamed the "weak governments" of the past for the

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<sup>78</sup> *Ibid.*, 251.

<sup>79</sup> Pierre Vilar, "Sobre los fundamentos de las estructuras nacionales", *Historia* 16, April 1978, 6.

<sup>80</sup> Fusi, "Centre", 41.

emergence of Catalan nationalism, and confirmed state repression as the main policy to suppress peripheral nationalism. Finally, he forbade any further discussion of the regionalist question in the National Assembly in the future and announced that “the Government, responsible for the Nation’s Power, feeling itself assisted by the unanimity of the national thought, will ban all discussion on regionalism in the press, books, and cultural centres.”<sup>82</sup>

The quarrel exemplifies the huge discrepancy between the traditionalist and the National Catholic concept of Spain. The case of Pemán is telling. A political theorist, who frequently pegged his ideas on to Vázquez de Mella, acknowledged that traditionalist postulates concerning the autonomy of the regions should not be applied by the dictatorship. On the contrary, the state had to “place in front of any theoretical [political] program the supreme realism of removing any danger for the unity of Spain” and suppress all regional movements. For this task he demanded from the state “an absolute inflexibility [in] its supreme duty to police, protect and harmonise” the nation.<sup>83</sup>

### **The regeneration of the nation**

The idea of regeneration acted in the discourse of the regime’s ideologues as the positive pole of the Anti-Spain. An ideal-typical common denominator which lay at the core of Fascist ideology,<sup>84</sup> the rebirth of the nation was the main tenet in the regime’s propaganda. Incorporating the ideas of Costa, Ganivet, Picavea and Ortega to their discourse the *primorriveristas* presented the regenerationists as the intellectual forerunners of the UP. Pegging their ideas on to these prestigious intellectuals, they scorned democracy, justified the closure of Parliament, and defended the regeneration of the nation via dictatorship as the only possible alternative.<sup>85</sup> This representation of regenerationist ideas was a biased, selective and simplistic one. It intentionally overlooked a general advocacy for a genuine democracy in the regenerationists’ writings and twisted all their postulates on national regeneration towards anti-liberal and authoritarian solutions. For example,

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<sup>81</sup> For Don Jaime complaints see Chapter 2. For Vázquez de Mella see Blinkhorn, *Carlism*, 40.

<sup>82</sup> Miguel Primo de Rivera, *Intervenciones en la Asamblea Nacional del General Primo de Rivera* [Madrid: 1930], 48-59

<sup>83</sup> Péman, *El hecho*, 248-249.

<sup>84</sup> Roger Griffin, *The Nature of Fascism* [London: 1993], 2.

<sup>85</sup> See Pemán, *El Hecho*, 16; Pemartín in *La Nación*, 30-9-1927; 10-12-1926; and *Los Valores*, 532; Maeztu in *El Sol*, 2-10-1923; and *La Nación*, 12-7-1927.

while Ganivet had disapproved dictatorship as the means to carry out the regeneration of Spain, the UP theorists argued the *abulia* of Spaniards' psychology and the "mental damage" done by the liberal politics could be only entirely removed by a government of coercion, force, and order, that is, by a dictatorship <sup>86</sup>.

The regeneration of the nation Primo's ideologues proclaimed, although based on those alleged traditional essences of Spain, did not mean a mere return to the golden eras. <sup>87</sup> The dictatorship, the *primorriveristas* claimed, "not only came to solve and clear up the mischief of the past, but to build and elaborate a new Spain in every aspect." <sup>88</sup> The regeneration of the nation would reach total proportions and the regime changes would extend the whole society. From the regime's mouthpiece, they advocated total regeneration of Spanish society. A regeneration that had "to reach every single sector of the national life; the political one and all of them, simply because all those sectors were corrupted by the destructive evil prior 1923." <sup>89</sup> The regeneration of the nation in National Catholicism was therefore based on an idealisation of the past but did not seek to turn the clock back and aimed to grasp the whole society. In this sense, the UP theorists certainly differentiated themselves from Traditionalism and related their views to the totalitarian dreams of Fascism. <sup>90</sup>

Aware of the need to propose new national goals to Spanish society as a way to strengthen patriotic sentiments the *primorriverista* intelligentsia proposed various routes. As far as the concept of national regeneration is concerned, it is possible to differentiate three main themes on which the official discourse framed the idea of a new Spain: *Hispanismo*, Spanish Morocco and the religious revival. None of them were in fact brand new as topics of Spanish nationalism, but certainly all of them were to acquire a renovated strength during the dictatorship. More importantly, all of them were conceived as a means to nationalise society on the principles of National-Catholicism. Pemán did not hide his intentions when declared that the governmental aim of these "collective enterprises" was to "give a sense of unity to the nation" and to strength "the affirmation of our [Spanish] personality – one and powerful - in the

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<sup>86</sup> Ganivet wrote: "I am not one of those who demand a genius conferred on dictatorship; a genius would be an artificial head that would eventually leave us worst than we are now", *Idearium*, 144. Pemartín in *La Nación*, 10-12-1926.

<sup>87</sup> Pemán, "Prólogo" in Primo de Rivera, *El pensamiento*, 11.

<sup>88</sup> Pemartín, *Los Valores*, 373.

<sup>89</sup> Pemartín in *La Nación*, 12-9-1928

<sup>90</sup> For the Fascists' idealisation of the nation's past see Griffin, *Fascism*, 4-6.

international arena.” Moreover, these “national aspirations” were being promoted to “shock the totality of society and beget the necessary social consciousness.”<sup>91</sup>

It is within this context of a confident nationalisation of the masses that one has to understand the Pan-Hispanic discourse and policies of Primo’s regime. At the doctrinal level, the contribution of the UP ideologues to *Hispanismo* was remarkable. Consistent with their providential concept of Spain and their idealised view of the American conquest, the strongmen of the regime attacked the Black Legend and praised the spiritual expansion of Spain in America.<sup>92</sup> Underlining the common religion, language, and imperial consciousness that had created the ‘Spanish race’, Pemán asserted that the great ideal of Spain was to “radiate its spiritual presence in America.”<sup>93</sup> He rejected material expansionism and political imperialism as childish diseases that nations like England, France and Germany were still suffering from. According to Pemán, Spain as the first imperial nation in history had overcome those archaic malaises and was in a position to enlighten and direct its former colonies in a spiritual manner. The practical side of that Spanish spiritual expansion was the creation of a society of Hispano-American nations with a unified law in order to stop the “aggressive advance” of the Anglo-Saxon powers. Moreover, the society would emphasise the primacy of the Catholic element as the unifying factor among nations and Spain was to have the leading role.<sup>94</sup> Thus, Spain regained its imperial mission and indirectly fought North American and British interventionism in Spanish America.

Pemán also understood the domestic utility of the Hispanic-American ideal. He portrayed Mussolini’s territorial demands towards France, Austria and Greece as an attempt to buttress Italian nationalism within Italy. Spain needed to followed the fascist example and promote “a policy of national affirmation, of Spanish cohesion and unity”, in order to create an “imperial consciousness”.<sup>95</sup> *Hispanismo*, Pemán claimed, had to be at the core of this new imperial consciousness and work to inculcate Spaniards nationalist goals. It also represented the antithesis of peripheral

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<sup>91</sup> Pemán, *El Hecho*, 255.

<sup>92</sup> Pemartín, “Política Hispano-Americana”, in Eduardo Pérez et al., *Cursos de ciudadanía* [Madrid: 1929], 38-91; *Los valores*, 528-529, 565-568.

<sup>93</sup> Pemán, *El valor del hispanoamericanismo* [Madrid: 1927], 7-20.

<sup>94</sup> *Ibid.*, 30-34.

<sup>95</sup> Pemán, *El Hecho*, 270-271.



nationalism and regionalism. The “rebirth of the imperial consciousness”, Pemán insisted, “is in itself the very negation of all movements of [national] dissociation.”<sup>96</sup>

The second of the “great collective enterprises” the ideologues proposed to the Spanish people was the colonial adventure in Africa. Like Pan-Hispanism, it had a clear neo-imperial connotation - even if the official message insisted the Spanish protectorate in Morocco was a “civilising mission”. In many respects, the UP luminaries simply followed the line the dictator and Martínez Anido had established during the Military Directory: Spain was fighting against barbarism and Bolshevism in the name of western civilisation.<sup>97</sup> The same Manichean rationale we have seen in the ideologues’ attack against peripheral nationalism can be appreciated here. It also had a domestic political objective, for it sought to endow Spanish identity with a strong counterrevolutionary flavour that would cement unity among Spaniards on religious bases. Maeztu, for instance, confessed his dream as Spaniard would be to see his “Fatherland becoming the vanguard of the Counterrevolution, as it was of the Counterreformation in the sixteenth century.”<sup>98</sup>

Like the Military Directory, the Civil Directory used the colonial war not only to portray Primo as a military genius but also as modern Messiah. Comparisons of Primo to the Catholic Kings, Napoleon and Mussolini continued to be the norm in the regime’s propaganda machine years after the landing of Alhucemas.<sup>99</sup> According to the *primorriveristas*, military success in Africa proved the providential character of the nation’s leader (*caudillo*), while at the same time showed Primo as a man of action able to understand Spanish people’s psychology.<sup>100</sup> Yet for all the *primorriverista* effort to politically maximise victory in Africa, the imperial myth had its limits as a propaganda asset, simply because war in Morocco had been highly unpopular since 1909. The fact that in 1927 the regime decided to call the commemoration of the end of the African campaign, the *Fiesta de la Paz* (thus

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<sup>96</sup> Pemán, *ibid.*, 255 and *La Nación*, 13-10-1928 and 23-10-1928. The dictatorship truly attempt to go beyond the mere oratory and developed an intense policy towards Spanish America, which included the reinforcement of cultural and economic exchanges and the propagation of Pan-Hispanic ideas in Spain. At the end of 1927, the appointment of Maeztu as ambassador to Argentina was partially an attempt to fulfil the aspirations of the conservative *Hispanismo* in South America. Pike, *Hispanismo*, 226-229.

<sup>97</sup> Maeztu in *La Nación*, 4-4-1927.

<sup>98</sup> *La Nación*, 17-3-1927.

<sup>99</sup> See for instance Rodríguez Tarduchy, *Psicología*, 79, 84, 103-109.

<sup>100</sup> *Ibid.*, 81-93, 150-151

celebrating peace rather than conquest) is significant of the dictatorship's understanding of the popular mood regarding the Moroccan war.<sup>101</sup>

There is little doubt that the ideologues of Primo regarded religion in their nationalist political discourse as the main spiritual means of bringing Spaniards together and it was used as an active tool to encourage patriotic feelings. As shown in Chapter 1, religion had proved quite useful as a factor of political mobilisation in Spain during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, in what was known as the 'Catholic revival'. By the mid-1920, the regime was eager to gain mass support stirring the population in the name of Catholicism. Pemartín wanted Catholicism to act as an "idealist force of social action."<sup>102</sup> As for domestic political use, once again, this evocation of religion was not mere nostalgia of the past, but rather paved the way for the future. When explaining the term "religion" in the slogan of the UP, Pemán asserted:

"[T]he religious affirmation in the UP's motto is not a lyrical invocation of the past [...] It is the proclamation of a Spanish conviction, which has in itself the commitment to give a Catholic meaning to all the orientations of our policies."<sup>103</sup>

What the UP essayist found useful in Catholicism as a political creed was its association with authority, hierarchy and order, together with its strength as a spiritual unifying factor. These were exactly the same virtues French integral nationalism highlighted from Catholicism. In both the French and the Spanish cases it is possible to observe a political and ideological instrumentation of the Catholic religion. This utilisation of Catholicism is what Michel Winock has named "Catholicity". Here, the important ideological matter was not the content of a faith, but religion interpreted as a framework of order.<sup>104</sup> It was not gratuitous that Primo's ideologues emphasised the role of religious indoctrination as a way to nationalise the masses in authoritarian values. Pemán insisted on a strong mandatory Catholic education (from elementary school to university) as the way for the masses to gain a powerful sense of national unity and social order.<sup>105</sup> Maeztu also realised the

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<sup>101</sup> For the commemoration of the *Fiesta de la Paz* see Chapter 6.

<sup>102</sup> Pemartín, *Los valores*, 618.

<sup>103</sup> Pemán, *El hecho*, 306.

<sup>104</sup> Michel Winock, "El nacionalismo francés", in *Nationalism in Europe*, vol. 2, 335-346.

<sup>105</sup> Pemán, *El Hecho*, 308-314; Pemartín, *Los Valores*, 420-21, 423-431.

importance of religion as a political device. He advocated inculcation of a religious and, above all, nationalist feeling in the masses so they would not follow the Russian example. To accomplish this, he reckoned, what was needed was not just a strong dogmatic system but also mighty state institutions. Patriotism was a powerful sentiment “to stir the human being” and had to be encouraged. But patriotism would not last unless it was “tied to a system of ideas by individuals and to an order of institutions and laws by society.”<sup>106</sup> The *primorriverista* intelligentsia regarded the importance of both the elaboration of a nationalist doctrine and the state agencies as two complementary elements for promotion of nationalist feelings.

It should be noticed here that the *primorriveristas* reserved the main and supreme role of propagating national identity to the state and not to the Catholic Church. Following the ideological premises established by the Military Directory, the UP ideologues claimed the Church should assist to promote patriotic feelings but always in a position of subordination vis-à-vis the state. The Catholic Church would not constitute an independent power as Traditionalists demanded. Catholicism may be regarded by the regime’s luminaries as ‘co-substantial’ to the nation, but the Church was certainly not to be on a par to the state. And it was precisely in the process of new authoritarian state-building initiated by the Civil Directory that the cracks in the alliance between the dictatorship and the ecclesiastical hierarchy appeared and the rupture of the regime with the Social-Catholics consummated.

## THE CREATION OF THE NEW STATE AND THE UNIÓN PATRIÓTICA

### The National Assembly and the Constitutional Project

Following the views of Maurice Barrès, the idea of an “internal constitution” of the nation, in which historic, religious and institutional values acquired a normative dimension, was taken as the doctrinal starting point in the building of a new authoritarian political regime.<sup>107</sup> The invocation of Catholicism and Monarchy as “the two maximum Spanish realities” and the organic concept of the nation clearly implied a hierarchical and anti-egalitarian notion of society, in which individuals were subordinated to the “will of the nation”. Hence, the opposition to liberal individualism and the defence of a hierarchical society were to characterise

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<sup>106</sup> *La Nación*, 12-7-1927.

the discourse of the ideologues of the regime concerning both the formation and functioning of the *Asamblea Nacional Consultiva* (National Assembly) and the construction of the corporative state.

The first step towards the elaboration of an anti-liberal political model was the creation of the National Assembly, a government-controlled chamber which substituted the constitutional *Cortes*. The idea of a new unicameral assembly had been advanced by the dictator as early as November 1925.<sup>108</sup> The project, however, encountered some problems and the wave of criticism it received from different political sectors, including the Catholic Right and the king, postponed its implementation. Finally, Primo decided to go ahead and in September 1927 a Royal Decree convoked the *Asamblea Nacional*.<sup>109</sup>

In early 1927, Pemartín launched a campaign from the pages of *La Nación* to support the creation of the National Assembly, which, he deemed, should be based on corporative representation and would mean “the final and definite dissolution of political parties.”<sup>110</sup> In his view, what Maura had failed to see was that “classical Parliamentarism [...] was the main, the only, obstacle for that revolution from above that has to be made completely in Spain.” Now the Assembly had to integrate all social classes, via “corporative and class suffrage,” and reach “efficient solutions” for the problems of the nation, especially in social and economic matters. Diverse social groups would be represented in “Aggregations in Corporations”, as opposed to political parties, and they would harmonise the national interest in the chamber. This idea of harmonic social integration did not envisage a return to the happy medieval Arcadia imagined by the Carlists, but rather to create “a future social and political world clearly differentiated from the past.”<sup>111</sup> However, the problem in Pemartín’s proposal lay in its inability to specify how that new “corporative and class suffrage” was to be organised, not least how those “Aggregations in Corporations” would assemble.

What Pemartín rightly foresaw was the elitist character of the chamber and its total subordination to the government. The essential aspect in the “radical reform” proposed by the Andalusian philosopher was to strengthen the

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<sup>107</sup> Pemartín in *La Nación*, 31-1-1927.

<sup>108</sup> *La Nación* 17-11-1925; 18-11-1925.

<sup>109</sup> Gómez-Navarro, *El régimen*, 266-268.

<sup>110</sup> *La Nación*, 31-1-1927; 15-2-1927; ; 17-2-1927; 18-9-1927; 18-11-1927; 29-10-1927.

<sup>111</sup> *La Nación*, 23-8-1927.

“independence of the executive power and governmental stability.” This was certainly the case. When the dictator formed the Assembly most of its members were chosen representing the state administration or the UP (including Pemartín, Pemán and Maeztu), and the government always kept a complete control over its own congress.<sup>112</sup> Notwithstanding the participation of Social Catholics and some conservative dynastic politicians of the Restoration regime in the National Assembly, the new chamber utterly alienated liberals, who complained that its corporative nature was a direct attack to the most elemental democratic principles. The radical political implications of the creation of the National Assembly was clearly perceived by *El Sol*. In early October, the liberal daily highlighted the fact that not even in Italy had parliament and universal suffrage been abolished. Spain was the only European country where parliamentary institutions had been replaced.<sup>113</sup> The socialists also refused to join the *primorrriverista* charade and Francisco Largo Caballero, Fernando de los Ríos and Dolores Cebrián (Julián Besteiro’s wife) rejected the invitation to become assembly members. Rather than integrating the different strands of support for the dictatorship the creation of the *Asamblea Nacional* exacerbated the difference between political groups.

The formation of the National Assembly meant the introduction of the corporative conception in a public institution for the very first time in Spanish history. This conception of the assembly was conditioned by the influence of both Traditionalist corporativism and Italian Fascism and it constituted the first effective step towards a new authoritarian state.<sup>114</sup> The following step was the drafting of a new constitution, in which Pemán and Maeztu took part as members of the First Section of the National Assembly. The section was a body constituted by the dictator to prepare a draft bill for a new constitution and was formed by important figures of different right wing groups, such the Traditionalist Pradera, the Maurists Goicoechea and Gabriel Maura, the conservative Juan de la Cierva and a majority of UP members (Yanguas, Garcia Oviedo, Pemán and Maeztu).

When the conservative members of the section demanded a return to the 1876 Constitution, only adding some amendments, the *primorrriveristas* opposed

<sup>112</sup> Gómez-Navarro, *El régimen*, 269.

<sup>113</sup> *El Sol*, 11-10-1927.

<sup>114</sup> Raúl Morodo, “La proyección constitucional de la dictadura: la Asamblea Nacional Consultiva. I”, *Boletín Informativo de Ciencia Política*, n. 13-14, August-December 1973, 86.

them and defended a radical rupture with the Restoration system.<sup>115</sup> Maeztu proposed the substitution of universal ballot for a corporative suffrage and the restriction of the “right of citizenship” to those who supported the government.<sup>116</sup> Pemán publicly insisted on the need to reject the 1876 Constitution and create “a new modern and effective organisation” of the state, which should encourage the executive power and concentrate on the economic issues of the nation. It was time “to go from the individualist state to the social state.”<sup>117</sup> The UP essayists supported in the First Section the creation of a new authoritarian political regime, but their actual legal and political proposal was still little systematised.<sup>118</sup> When the final draft was finally completed in July 1929, the dictator’s reticence over adopting the text and the eventual fall of the regime made the work of the First Section useless and the plans to implement the new constitution were abandoned. Nonetheless, in the 1930s the members of *Acción Española* regarded the text as the “germ” of their new “doctrinal movement.”<sup>119</sup>

## The Corporative State

The creation of a corporative system to regulate national production and eliminate class struggle was doubtless one of the main contributions of the dictatorship to the formation of a new state. The corporative reform was masterminded by the Minister of Labour, Eduardo Aunós, who framed the system combining doctrines of late nineteenth century Social Catholicism, Sorel’s syndicalism, and Fascism.<sup>120</sup> Aunós, wanted the new system to be the backbone of a modern technocratic corporative state, a third way beyond socialism and liberalism.<sup>121</sup> Fascinated with the Italian example after his trip to Rome in 1926 where he met the fascist leader Giuseppe Bottai, the Spanish Minister of Labour created a state-controlled corporative organisation. It covered all economic sectors, divided in 27 corporations and controlled by 27 corporative councils (*consejos de*

<sup>115</sup> Gómez-Navarro, *El régimen*, 295.

<sup>116</sup> González Cuevas, *Acción Española*, 106-107.

<sup>117</sup> Pemán, *El Hecho*, 79, 332-333. See also his articles in *La Nación*, 29-11-1928; 7-12-1928; 29-12-1928; 11-1-1929.

<sup>118</sup> Gómez-Navarro, *El régimen*, 295.

<sup>119</sup> González Cuevas, *Acción Española*, 108.

<sup>120</sup> Julio Gil Pecharrmán, *Conservadores subversivos* [Madrid: 1994], 51.

<sup>121</sup> Eduardo Aunós, *Las corporaciones del Trabajo en el Estado Moderno* [Madrid: 1928], 143. See also by Aunós, *El Estado corporativo* [Madrid: 1928] and *La organización corporativa del trabajo y su posible desenvolvimiento* [Madrid: 1929].

*corporación*) and formed arbitration committees (*comités paritarios*) to resolve disputes between employers and workers. Moreover, the corporations were conceived not only to solve labour conflicts but also to inculcate both “workers and employers a great patriotic feeling”,<sup>122</sup> that is, to indoctrinate the population in nationalist values. It was, after all, a system embedded in organicist theories of German nationalism, closer to the models of the radical Right than to Social-Catholicism.<sup>123</sup>

Such a fascist leaning in the structure of the state proved highly controversial. The system was soon severely criticised by many industrialists, landowners and Social Catholics, who considered it led to a huge state interventionism and resented the involvement of the socialists in the corporative model.<sup>124</sup> It was precisely at this point that the new corporative system became a challenge to ecclesiastic interests, since the non-incorporation of Catholic unions into the *comités paritarios* seriously hampered the Church’s attempts to expand its social influence and to defeat the forces of secularisation. The Catholic daily, *El Debate*, criticized Aunós’ system as centralist and denounced the state manipulation of the *consejos* and *comités*.<sup>125</sup> Social-Catholics especially lamented the formation of *comités* in the countryside (for they thought it would pave the way for a socialist takeover) and paralysed the implementation of the *primorriverista* agrarian legislation.<sup>126</sup>

The ideologues of the UP presented the system as the only way to modernise the country using transformation and constructive discursive strategies designed to emphasise the need for change. They developed further Primo’s technocratic discourse and encouraged state intervention, via corporativism, protectionism and investment in public works. They deliberately gave a pseudo-scientific and technical flavour to this discourse and asserted that governmental intervention “aimed to transform Spain into a country of full and scientific economic performance, via the systematic exploitation of all its resources.”<sup>127</sup> The goal of state intervention was to

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<sup>122</sup> Aunós, *Las corporaciones*, 182-183.

<sup>123</sup> For the nature of the system in see Miguel Ángel Perfecto, “Regeneracionismo y corporativismo en la dictadura de Primo de Rivera”, in *Las derechas en la España contemporánea*, 177-196.

<sup>124</sup> Ben-Ami, *Los orígenes de la II República*, 71-76.

<sup>125</sup> *El Debate*, 22-1-1929

<sup>126</sup> Carlos Ruiz del Castillo, *El conflicto entre el comunismo y la reforma social* [Madrid: 1928]; Juan Pan-Montojo, “Asociacionismo agrario, administración y corporativismo en la dictadura de Primo de Rivera”, *Historia Social*, n. 43, 2002, 25-29.

<sup>127</sup> Pemartín in *La Nación*, 14-1-1928.

perform “a great social task”, so the regime could surpass socialism “with its own arms: socialising, Christian and rationally, improving the current reality, instead of destroying it.”<sup>128</sup> In addition, “a state-oriented intervention in the national economic process” was needed “to overcome the crude rough *laissez-faire* and the liberal utopia.”<sup>129</sup> In other words, the regime proposed social reforms administered by the state intending to pacify class struggle by creating national solidarity instead.<sup>130</sup> Like the fascist theorists in Italy, Aunós proposal defended a ‘third way’, which went beyond liberal and socialist models while safeguarded capitalists’ interests by state protectionism.

In short, the *primorrriveristas* espoused a new concept of state, which clearly differed from previous conservative models. This new National-Catholic model was vaguely defined from a doctrinal viewpoint. Nevertheless, the attempt to go beyond liberal institutions via a corporative chamber, the reinforcement of the executive power, the subordination of the legislative to the government’s will, and the limitation of citizens’ rights were elements which showed that the dictatorship was firmly taking an authoritarian direction. In fact, all these factors can be observed in the process of fascistization (*fascistizzazione*, as it was labelled in Italy) started by Mussolini in 1924, in which liberal institutions were bypassed via enforcement of the executive power and which culminated with the demotion of parliament to that of a decorative institution after the 1928 electoral reform.<sup>131</sup>

Aunós system was design to co-opt the moderate sectors of the labour movement into a system that attempted to indoctrinate workers in patriotic values. Yet the political price paid by the dictatorship was enormous. The corporative system alienated the Social Catholics, the regime’s main base of social support, and employers, who thought the arbitration committees would benefit workers. This meant that large sectors of the upper and middle classes, which had supported the regime precisely on the basis of crushing the working class, felt betrayed when the corporative system was created.<sup>132</sup> On top of this, when Calvo Sotelo announced his tax reform, Primo made public his intention to implement a land reform and Spain was hit by the ‘peseta crisis’, landowners and industrialist began to reconsider their

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<sup>128</sup> Pemartín in *La Nación*, 14-1-1928.

<sup>129</sup> Pemartín, *Los Valores*, 212-213.

<sup>130</sup> Miguel Artola, *Partidos y programas políticos*, [Madrid: 1991], vol. 1, 559-560.

<sup>131</sup> Enzo Collotti, *Fascismo, Fascismi* [Milan: 1994], 42-43.

<sup>132</sup> Ben-Ami, *Fascism*, 325-332.



support for a dictator whom they had backed to defend their interests and who they now deemed was turning against them.<sup>133</sup>

### **The UP and the mobilisation of the masses**

Inspired by the Italian example, the regime sought popular support and created the UP in April 1924. As Pemán pointed out years later, the goal was at these first stages “to equip the dictatorship with a civilian base” to support the government and express public acceptance.<sup>134</sup> Put it in another way, the UP was created to give the dictatorship an instrument of ideological hegemony.<sup>135</sup> Despite its early formation, Primo did not give the party a complete national structure before 1926 and its political programme was not fully defined until July 1928 - when the dictator outlined the doctrine and the way the UP had to perform in public.<sup>136</sup>

The ideologues of the regime helped to define the doctrine of the party in the official press and lectures.<sup>137</sup> From the pages of *La Nación*, Pemán, in a long series of articles entitled “Comments on the UP Decalogue” presented the party as the ideal tool to indoctrinate the masses in the principles of fatherland, religion and monarchy, so a “real spirit of citizenship” could be embedded in the whole population.<sup>138</sup> The UP was to be the single party of the nation, since in the future there would be only room for two political parties: the national one, defender of the patria, social order, and Christian civilisation, and the communist one. This vision of the UP was shared by Maeztu and Pemartín, who, like Mussolini, repeatedly insisted the party was “neither right nor left” but “national.”<sup>139</sup> Moreover, the *primorrriveristas* reserved for the party the role of penetrating all areas of society so the UP could link the elite to the needs of the masses, and ultimately indoctrinate the people. This view was identical to those of Alfredo Rocco, the mastermind of the

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<sup>133</sup> Calvo's proposal aimed at increasing upper classes' taxation and hunting down tax evasion. Calvo, *La contribución a la riqueza territorial de España* [Madrid: 1926], 10-17, 30. On the peseta crisis, Fernando, Eguidazu, “La crisis de la peseta y la caída de la Dictadura”, *Cuadernos Económicos de I.C.E.*, (1979) n. 10, 299-352.

<sup>134</sup> Pemán, *El hecho*, 35-39.

<sup>135</sup> González Calbet, *La Dictadura*, 137-138.

<sup>136</sup> See Primo's public letter to Gabilán, *La Nación*, 1-7-1928.

<sup>137</sup> See, for instance, Maeztu in *La Nación*, 27-10-1927; 3-11-1927; 1-12-1927.

<sup>138</sup> Pemán's articles in *La Nación*, 20-9-1928; 8-10-1928; 13-10-1928, 23-10-1928; 31-10-1928; 17-11-1928.

<sup>139</sup> Pemartín, *Los Valores*, 633; Maeztu in *La Nación*, 27-10-1927.

totalitarian Italian state, who advocated infiltrating the people from the party, in order to spiritually guiding the masses.<sup>140</sup>

The mobilisation of the masses to support the regime became paramount in this scheme. Pemán thought that the UP should neutralise the “negative” and “destructive” aspects of mass politics and proposed canalising the political impulses of the masses into “constructive action”, which essentially meant popular participation in the regime’s patriotic celebrations and gatherings for praising the Spanish *caudillo*.<sup>141</sup> Pemartín also realised the need of mobilising the masses. To complete the work of the dictatorship, he wrote, “the support of the masses is needed. Cánovas created for himself an artificial support via false and conventional suffrage [...] Let us look at its sad consequences and take as many measures as needed to form a real support to awake and co-ordinate a great Spanish citizens’ mass.”<sup>142</sup> Following the dictator’s concept of citizenship, Primo’s house intellectuals stated the UP had to be “the civic militia” which would spread the official ideology and guarantee “the definitive irreversibility” of the “formidable transformation” brought about by the regime.<sup>143</sup>

Another feature the UP ideologues shared with the Italian fascists was the perception of the party and the militia as a tool for combating the Left with violence.<sup>144</sup> Maeztu saw the UP and the *Somatén* as the avant-garde in the defence of the state and Christian civilisation against the Left. Always ready to justify violence against his political enemies, Maeztu declared in a conference in Bilbao in late 1927, that he was prepared “to shed his blood with the UP and the *Somatén* in the struggle against communism.”<sup>145</sup> When in 1929, after the insurrections of Valencia and Ciudad Real, the government failed to mobilise support from the party’s affiliates, Maeztu saw changes were needed in the UP. In a letter to Pemán dated December 1929, he forecast that the UP would be necessary “to establish some sort of fascism.”<sup>146</sup> In the light of the events, the task was to build a strong UP similar to the Soviet Communist party and the Fascist one, since in these countries the party was the base of stability of their regimes. To strengthen the basis of the UP, Maeztu

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<sup>140</sup> Álvarez Chillida, *Pemán*, 309.

<sup>141</sup> On the UP mobilisation of the masses and public patriotic celebrations see Chapter 6.

<sup>142</sup> Pemartín in *La Nación*, 15-3-1928.

<sup>143</sup> Pemartín in *La Nación*, 15-3-1928.

<sup>144</sup> Pemán, *El Hecho*, 109-112.

<sup>145</sup> *La Nación*, 7-7-1927.

<sup>146</sup> Maeztu to Pemán, 12-12-1929, in Álvarez Chillida, *Pemán*, 308.

opined, some sort of political and institutional privileges for the militants were needed, so the members' lives would be dependent on the maintenance of the regime, as in Italy and the USSR. Maeztu proposal clearly moved towards a totalitarian party fused with the state. It was too late. By December 1929, the dictatorship was in a terminal crisis and the UP rank and file was leaving the sinking ship.

## NATIONAL CATHOLICISM, FASCISM AND THE PRIMORRIVERISTA HERITAGE

In order to understand the impact of counterrevolutionary European trends in the UP doctrine, one has to analyse first of all the reception of the Italian regime by Primo's ideologues. A political science comparison may tell us that the *primorriverista* regime was more similar to Pilsudski's dictatorship in Poland than to Mussolini's in Italy. The seizure of power by the military and the creation of an official party as a mechanism of social control are common elements in the 1920s Greek, Polish and Spanish dictatorships.<sup>147</sup> But from a historian's perspective, the truth of the matter is that in terms of ideology and political goals the UP luminaries looked to Rome for inspiration, not Warsaw. Primo's propaganda machinery steadily presented the Spanish and the Italian dictatorships as equivalent historical movements. It claimed both regimes had defeated Bolshevism and regenerated their nations in a similar authoritarian manner. It also forecast that the UP would follow the Italian example in the mobilisation of the masses.<sup>148</sup> The UP theorists contributed to the promotion of this parallelism and stressed in their books and the official press the ideological similarities between the two dictatorships.<sup>149</sup> However, such an apologetic view of fascism did not mean a mimetic assimilation of Italian doctrine but rather a selective incorporation of some principles and ideas. Thus the conception of the UP as anti-party, the *Führerprinzip*, the corporative system, the state intervention to overcome class-struggle, and the need to mobilise the masses, were ideas similar to (when not directly taken from) fascist postulates; whilst some

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<sup>147</sup> Ben-Ami, "La dictadura de Primo de Rivera. Una perspectiva comparativa", *El poder militar en la España contemporánea* [Madrid: 1989], 126.

<sup>148</sup> See, for instance, the editorials of *La Nación*, 27-9-1926; 7-6-1928; 18-9-1929. See also C. de Iragorri in *Unión Patriótica*, 15-11-1927.

<sup>149</sup> For the defence of Fascism see Maeztu in *El Sol*, 14-5-1924; and *La Nación*, 14-3-1927; 6-6-1927; 28-7-1927; Pemartín in *La Nación*, 6-12-1928; 28-11-1928; 28-1-1929. For a defence of fascist postulates of hierarchy and the creation of a new aristocracy see Pemán *El hecho*, 191-192.

other aspects, such as the non-confessional character of the fascist state or the clashes between the Italian government and the Vatican, led the UP essayists to censure Mussolini's standpoints.<sup>150</sup>

The UP essayists' occasional criticism of the Italian dictatorship has been considered as evidence of the ideological differences between National Catholicism and Fascism. Pemán's negative characterization of the fascist state as "agnostic" and Pemartín's disapproval of the "divergences" between the Italian government and the Church are usually portrayed as examples of this ideological discrepancy.<sup>151</sup> This view, however, overlooks the steady defence Primo's ideologues made of Fascism as a modern political doctrine and fails to recognise that the aim of the Spanish thinkers was to present Fascism as compatible with Catholic political doctrines. It was not by chance that, when in November 1928 the Catholic daily *El Debate* launched a campaign criticising the increasing power achieved by the state in Italy and the Fascists' quarrel with the Vatican, Pemartín responded virulently from the pages of *La Nación* defending Mussolini's regime.<sup>152</sup> He argued Mussolini's postulates were attuned with the Vatican doctrine (especially the Leo XIII anti-liberal theses) and suggested the 'Roman Question' would be solved simply by locating "fervent Catholics in the fascist high ranks."<sup>153</sup> It was a matter of people not of doctrine.

This attempt to incorporate fascist postulates into a hard core of authoritarian conservatism was by no means exceptional in the European Right. As Martin Blinkhorn has observed, rightist regimes all around the continent began in the 1920s to borrow selectively from the Italian example – a tendency only to be increased in the 1930s with the Nazis in power.<sup>154</sup> This process of ideological *fascistization* and the political alliances among Fascists and conservatives in many European countries have made the task of differentiating between Fascism, the radical Right and other

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<sup>150</sup> For a critique of the Fascist "agnostic state" see Pemán *ibid.*, 174-175.

<sup>151</sup> González Cuevas, *Acción Española*, 100; idem, *Historia de las derechas*, 281. Especially striking is the case of Genoveva García Queipo de Llano who quotes Pemartín regrets about the "discrepancies" between Mussolini and the Vatican, but overlooks the fact that in the following paragraph of that very same article Pemartín states that these discrepancies are not really important and that Fascism is perfectly compatible with Roman Catholic postulates. See García Queipo de Llano, "Los ideólogos", 227-230. Pemartín's article, "Dime con quien andas...", *La Nación*, 6-12-1928.

<sup>152</sup> For the Social Catholics' criticism see the editorials of *El Debate*, 2-11-1928; 13-11-1928; 20-11-1928; 27-11-1928.

<sup>153</sup> *La Nación*, 6-12-1928; 28-12-1928; 28-1-1929.

forms of conservatism all the more difficult for historians. Nevertheless, for analytical purposes it is possible to differentiate at least two strands of a new right-wing thought in the inter-war period: a radical Right, as represented in the main by Fascism, and a conservative Right, which included constitutional conservatism but also various currents of conservative authoritarianism.<sup>155</sup>

Among the different groups of the radical Right there were of course ideological differences. Fascism represented, at least on paper, a form of revolutionary ultra-nationalism for national rebirth that was based on a vitalist philosophy. Fascists considered their respective nations as being in a state of decadence due to the effect of liberal and democratic institutions and sought to create an authoritarian system led by a new ruling elite that would bind society together within a new social order.<sup>156</sup> Mussolini's party and regime were of course the touchstone of Fascism in the 1920s. Other groups in the radical Right which emerged as a reaction to the socio-political changes of the first quarter of the twentieth century were also extremely nationalist and opposed liberalism and democracy but their political views relied more on traditional religion than Italian fascism. *Action Française*, for example, was virulently anti-Marxist, violent and defended a hierarchical social order; yet the ideas of mobilising the masses and transforming class-structures were not as discursively prominent as in the fascist case.<sup>157</sup>

On the other hand, authoritarian conservatism embraced those sectors of the traditional liberal conservative parties, which partly broke with the parliamentary forms of moderate conservatism. It proposed a partial transformation of the system but avoided radical breaks in legal continuity, let alone encouraged social revolution. Chamberlain in the UK, Sonnino in Italy, and Joao Franco in Portugal and the Maurist Youth in Spain are some examples of these authoritarian conservatives acting within conservative parties.

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<sup>154</sup> Martin Blinkhorn, "Introduction. Allies, rivals, or antagonist? Fascist and conservatives in modern Europe", in M. Blinkhorn (ed.), *Fascist and Conservatives. The Radical Right and the Establishment in Twentieth-Century Europe* [London: 1990], 2, 8.

<sup>155</sup> *Ibid.*, 1. For a different division stressing the differences between Fascism, radical Right and conservative authoritarian Right as the "three faces of authoritarian nationalism" see Stanley Payne, *Historia del Fascismo* [Barcelona: 1995], 24-30.

<sup>156</sup> Martin Blinkhorn, *Fascism and the Right in Europe* [New York: 2000], 6.

<sup>157</sup> Eugene Weber, *L'Action Française* [Paris: 1985], 25-38.

If we are to locate UP ideology within the European framework of the new Right of the 1920s, National Catholicism would represent a significantly *fascisticised* Spanish variant of the radical Right, which went beyond the postulates of both liberal conservatism and reactionary traditionalism and bid for an authoritarian and centralist state. True, National Catholicism incorporated ideas and policies from the Italian regime. Yet the discourse of Primo's ideologues cannot be considered fascist *sensu stricto*. Their core postulates resembled much more those of *L'Action Française*, both in their use of Catholicism as an ideological tool to promote a hierarchical social order and their limited will to change social structures.

It is in the conception of the nation and the political principles derived from it where we can find the key differences and similarities between National Catholicism and Fascism. As shown above, at the core of the UP discourse lay the organic concept of the nation in which Catholicism is identified as the essence of Spain. Based on a providential and vitalist interpretation of history, the nation is endowed with a sacred quality in its inception and Catholic religion defended as the Spanish *Volkgeist*. As in any other nationalism defined by ethnic factors following the German romantic tradition, including Italian Fascism, the nation is portrayed as a living organism to whom individuals and territories are completely subordinate. As opposed to the 'civic' model of nation defended by liberals, Spanish National Catholic identity is not linked to any sort of political rights or liberties, but rather by a spiritual character: religion.

This religious concept of the nation plays the key role in the process of "sacralization of politics". Catholicism was considered to be the spiritual value to politically regenerate the nation and the crucial means to inculcate patriotic feelings among the masses. In this way, the political discourse and the nationalist ideas became 'sacralized' and National Catholicism can be considered as a political religion, like some other nationalisms which emerged in societies in which the Church wielded a great influence in the formation of mentalities.<sup>158</sup> National Catholicism indisputably coincided with Italian Fascism, and later Nazism, in the sense that they all constructed a religion of the fatherland, regarding the nation as the highest spiritual and political value.<sup>159</sup> However, while in the Fascist example the concept of Fatherland originates from a secular concept of nation, and later

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<sup>158</sup> For the concept of political religion see the introduction to this work.

incorporates Catholic rhetoric and rituals, in the case of National Catholicism the very concept of nation was endowed with an essential Catholic connotation. As opposed to the Fascists, the *primorrriveristas* directly incorporated religious ideas, myths, and rituals into their nationalist discourse with no previous 'sacramental transference'.

Yet the trees of difference should not preclude us from seeing the forest of similarities. Mussolini and Primo's regimes emerged from analogous socio-political crises in the aftermath of WWI.<sup>160</sup> This had an impact on the ideological similarities of both dictatorships. Nationalism and counterrevolution became the main tenets of both regimes because they were considered the most appropriate ways to overcome the leftist challenge. The idea of the nation as the supreme sacred value, the use of the state as a means to indoctrinate and control the whole society, the attempt, at least on paper, to overcome class struggle via national solidarity were all common elements in fascist and National Catholic ideology. Primo and Mussolini realised the profound transformations brought about by the Great War and considered new challenges required new measures, such as rebuilding the nation-state and incorporating the masses into the political system via anti-democratic mobilisation. As a result, both dictatorships produced a twin populist and Manichean discourse of national re-birth and fighting the anti-nation - a black and white picture that could simplistically explain a rapidly changing Europe.

The political discourse bound to this concept of the nation was violently authoritarian and it established a double ideological rupture with conservative and traditionalist doctrines in Spain. First, the ideologues of Primo de Rivera went beyond Maurist postulates by defending an absolute rejection of liberal political principles, including universal suffrage, the Constitution of 1876, the Parliament, and the political parties. Here, the influence of the new European radical Right became paramount. In this sense, it is difficult to accept the view that "the ideologues of the regime belonged to a not radically anti-parliamentary traditional Right" and their postulates were far from fascist ideology.<sup>161</sup>

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<sup>159</sup> For Germany see Burleigh, *The Third Reich*, 3-8. For Italy see Gentile, *The Sacralization*, x.

<sup>160</sup> Paul Preston, *Las derechas españolas en el siglo XX: autoritarismo, fascismo y golpismo* [Madrid: 1986], 20.

<sup>161</sup> García Queipo de Llano, "Los ideólogos", 227-230. In the same vein, Manuel García Canales, *El problema constitucional en la Dictadura de Primo de Rivera* [Madrid: 1980], 116.

Second, National-Catholic discourse clearly detached itself from Traditionalism in several main issues. Here, the assumption that Primo's theoreticians were unable to go beyond the traditionalist political discourse seems highly questionable.<sup>162</sup> The defence of a centralist state, the fascist influence in the formation of a single party and the conception of the corporative organisation in which the state is to play a dominant role are all examples of issues that differentiated the *primorriveristas'* position from both Social Catholics and Traditionalists, and indeed led to the political confrontation of the latter with the dictatorship. Moreover, the invocation of tradition and national glories in Primo's political collaborators did not mean an attempt to return to an idealised past, as was the case with Carlists. Rather they wanted to build a new political regime in keeping with modern times while preserving what they deemed to be national essences.

The significance of National Catholicism as an ideology has also to be considered in the light of its own historical development and the highly influential role it was going to play during the Second Republic and Francoism. Soon after the fall of Primo in January 1930, ex-ministers and ideologues of the regime gathered together to form the *Unión Monárquica Nacional* (UMN). In April 1930, Maeztu, the count of Guadalhorce, Calvo Sotelo, Pemán, Pemartín, Vicente Gay, Delgado Barreto, and the son of the dictator, José Antonio, founded the new party in an attempt to replace the UP. The political discourse of the UMN did not vary substantially from the one of the UP, reproducing its apocalyptic vision of Spain if democracy was to succeed. During 1930 and early 1931, in an effort to gain popular support the main propagandists of the UMN campaigned around Spain, praising 'sacred violence' to retake power and accusing the liberal monarchist parties of being willing to return to the 'decadent' parliamentary system.<sup>163</sup> In turn, the dynastic right openly condemned the UMN's ideological radicalism and ostracized the *primorriveristas* because of their belligerent model of action.<sup>164</sup> The abrupt breach with the formulae of the dynastic right that began during the Civil Directory continued after the fall of Primo's regime.

The coming of the Second Republic on 14 April 1931 did nothing but accelerate the ideological radicalism of the *primorriverista* intelligentsia. In

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<sup>162</sup> González Cuevas, *Acción Española*, 97-101.

<sup>163</sup> Ben-Ami, "The Forerunners", 60-63.

<sup>164</sup> Ben-Ami, "The Crisis of the Dynastic Élite in the Transition from Monarchy to Republic, 1929-1931" in Frances Lannon and Paul Preston (eds.), *Élites and Power in Twentieth-Century Spain*. [Oxford: 1990], 79.



December that year, the Alfonsine Monarchists, as they came to be known, published the first issue of *Acción Española*, a political journal created to develop a theory of counterrevolution able to endow civil-military insurrections against the Republic with a doctrinal base.<sup>165</sup> During the following years those who gathered around *Acción Española*, and its political party, *Renovación Española*, steadily propagated the beliefs that they had first anticipated during the dictatorship. True, opposition to a democratic state gave the *primorriveristas*' discourse a more traditionalist flavour. And yet the main principles of *Hispanismo*, militarism, the myth of Anti-Spain, the incorporation of fascist ideas and the sacred concept of the nation remained at the core of National Catholicism.<sup>166</sup>

The *primorriverista* influence on authoritarian thought in the 1930s went well beyond the members of *Renovación Española*, since it also provided the doctrinal bases of what has been considered the "real" Spanish fascism of *Falange* and the *JONS*. The Spanish fascists, led by Jose Antonio Primo de Rivera, inherited the concept of Catholicism as 'co-substantial' with the nation, and the concomitant use of 'Catholicity', to frame a discourse in which the unity of Spain, the imperial dreams, the condemnation of Enlightenment thought and the exaltation of Mussolini became paramount in the same manner the UP propagandists had done the previous decade.<sup>167</sup> This ideological bond has to be understood in two ways. First, it is important to bear in mind that the characteristics of Fascism in every country partially derived from the specific national traditions in terms of conservative and patriotic rhetoric.<sup>168</sup> In this case, the doctrine of Primo's ideologues was the final contribution to the Spanish nationalist tradition and certainly paved the way for the *Falange*. Second, one should not forget, the political, economic, and even family links that the *falangistas* had with figures of *Renovación Española*, which facilitated not only the funding of *Falange*

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<sup>165</sup> Gil Pecharromán, *Conservadores*, 102.

<sup>166</sup> See, for instance, Ramiro de Maeztu, *Defensa de la Hispanidad* [Madrid: 1934]; José Pemartín, "Culturas y nacionalismo (III)", *Acción Española*, 1-10-1934, 78-79; "Culturas y nacionalismo (IV)", *Acción Española*, 1-10-1934, 277-297; *Introducción a una filosofía de lo temporal. Doce lecciones sobre Espacio, Tiempo y Causalidad* [Sevilla, 1937, 1<sup>st</sup> ed. 1934-1935].

<sup>167</sup> For these ideas of the leaders of the Spanish Fascists see Jose Antonio Primo de Rivera, *Obras Completas*, [Madrid: 1954], 49-51, 53-54, 64-69, 127, 286-287, 754, 757; Onésimo Redondo, *Textos Políticos* [Madrid: 1975], 156-172. The main exception to this Catholic concept of the nation was Ramiro Ledesma Ramos, whose secular postulates were uncommon among the Spanish fascists. See, for example, *La Conquista del Estado*, n. 10, 16-5-1931.

<sup>168</sup> Preston, *Las derechas*, 23.

and the *JONS* but also the process of mutual ideological reception.<sup>169</sup> Thus the advent of Spanish Fascism did not occur suddenly in the 1930s, but rather represented a process of ideological crystallization of *primorriverista* nationalism from the previous decade onwards.<sup>170</sup>

The Civil War was the final step in the ideological development of the Alfonsist Monarchists. It was during these years when they openly advocated the merging of Nazism and Italian Fascism with traditionalist postulates to formulate a “Christian Totalitarianism”, as the bases of the “National Catholic” state - the Spanish variant of the regimes of Hitler and Mussolini.<sup>171</sup> This ideological task had an extension at the political level. The figures of *Acción Española* actively intervened in the creation of the *F.E.T. y de las J.O.N.S.*, the single political organisation that fused *Falange*, the Carlists, and the rest of the rightist groups under Franco’s leadership in April 1937.<sup>172</sup>

The former UP ideologues also took a leading role as propagandists of Franco’s Nationalists. Soon integrated in his provisional government, they defended the army as the redeemer of the nation and emphasised the struggle against Anti-Spain as before in religious and pathological terms to justify the uprising against the democratic Republic and the subsequent repression of Republicans.<sup>173</sup> The same totalitarian rationale that the *primorriveristas* had employed ten years ago was then applied in the process of de-humanization of the “internal enemy”. Pemán’s famous work, *The Poem of the Beast and the Angel* (1938), in which supreme Good has to fight a “crusade” against utter Evil, was only one of the numerous writings exhorting this course of action.<sup>174</sup> In the late 1930s and early 1940s, however, the destruction

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<sup>169</sup> For the political relations between the Alfonsist Monarchists and *Falange* see Preston, “Alfonsist monarchism and the coming of the Spanish Civil War”, in Martin Blinkhorn (ed.), *Spain in Conflict 1931-1939. Democracy and Its Enemies* [London: 1986], 171-173.

<sup>170</sup> Ben-Ami, “The forerunners”, 72.

<sup>171</sup> José Pemartín, *Qué es ‘Lo nuevo’... Consideraciones sobre el momento español presente* [Santander: 1938], 32, 52, 248-249; “España como pensamiento”, *Acción Española* [Burgos: 1937], 399, 402-404. For Pemán see, for example, “La transición y el estilo de Menéndez Pelayo”, 23-5-1937 *ABC*, Seville; “Una política de unidad”, *ABC*, Seville, 1-9-1937; José Antonio, pero todo José Antonio”, *ABC*, Seville, 20-11-1938; “La Falange Española Tradicionalista y de las JONS”, *Orientación Española*, 1-8-1938 and 15-8-1938.

<sup>172</sup> Álvarez Chillida, *Pemán*, 116; Quiroga, “La idea de España”, 198.

<sup>173</sup> For the invention of an international Communist plot to justify the military coup of July 1936 and its use as a key discursive element throughout the Civil War and Franco’s dictatorship see Herbert R. Southworth, *El lavado de cerebro de Francisco Franco* [Barcelona: 2000], 21-186. On the use of the myth of the Anti-Spain by the rebels during the Civil War see Reig Tapia, “La justificación ideológica del alzamiento de 1936”, 211-237.

<sup>174</sup> Pemán, *El poema de la Bestia y el Ángel*, [Zaragoza: 1938].

of the “internal enemy” was no longer a political metaphor, it became the actual physical extermination of political opponents.

Franco, who himself subscribed to *Acción Española* during the republican years, sought a kind of national regeneration, based on the Catholic idea of redemption and a bastardised version of regenerationism, which was nothing but a duplicate of that elaborated by Primo’s intelligentsia.<sup>175</sup> The same “baroque” rhetoric of Patria, Purity, and Poetry was used *ad nauseam* to gain control of society after the war.<sup>176</sup> Indeed, the entire Francoist corporative state was constructed on these ideological bases in which nationalist postulates, violence and economics were interrelated to frame a totalitarian Spain that, as in the cases of Italy and Germany, was able to protect existing traditions, adapting them to modern times.<sup>177</sup>

In their attempt to give a doctrinal basis to Primo’s dictatorship the UP ideologues created a new National Catholic discourse according to what they considered to be the *Zeitgeist*, which effectively differentiated itself from Traditionalism and Maurism. Their ideology was at times superficial and lacked great originality, but by mixing various conservative traditions the regime’s luminaries certainly generated a new highly *fascisticised* nationalist discourse similar to the rest of the European radical Right. This discourse had at its core a sacred concept of the nation and a religious concept of politics with totalitarian aspirations analogous to the one represented by Fascism, but maintained Catholicism as the main unifying national factor. It also had an official rhetoric that emphasised the image of two irreconcilable Spains. There can be little doubt that during the second half of the 1920s the ideologues of the regime unequivocally anticipated the precepts of the 1930s Spanish extreme Right, and constituted the ideological and personnel basis of Francoism. Thus, we must radically reconsider the view that there was neither a nationalist ideology of the Spanish Right nor a process of political polarisation in Spain prior to the coming of the Second Republic in 1931.

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<sup>175</sup> For the idea of national regeneration in Franco see Michael Richards, “Constructing the Nationalist State: Self Sufficiency and Regeneration in the Early Franco Years”, in *Nationalism and the Nation*, 149-157.

<sup>176</sup> Carbayo-Abengózar, “Shaping women”, 75-78.

<sup>177</sup> Michael Richards, *Un tiempo de silencio* [Barcelona: 1998], 76-80.

## CHAPTER 4. STATE NATIONALISATION OF THE MASSES: THE ARMY

*“Sirs, have you ever considered that over the next ten years approximately one million Spaniards will complete military service? Let us dream....One million Spaniards!... Imagine that those men when they leave the barracks for the last time take away embedded in their brains the idea of the fatherland. [Because] the fatherland is a common good that has been willed to us and we must transmit it entirely to our successors.”*

(Emilio de Rueda)<sup>1</sup>

### INTRODUCTION

The role of the army as an agency of nationalisation is often highlighted as essential to the process of nation-building. By its very nature, the army of the modern state has become an institution devoted to fostering the feeling of national unity among the masses. Daily life in the armed forces requires soldiers to expand local attachments and to consent to, if not accept, the ideology of the state. Nineteenth and early twentieth century systematic conscription provided European states with the possibility of teaching the language of the dominant culture and indoctrinating a vast part of the population in patriotic values. With its rituals, ceremonies and regimental schools, the army grew to be a ‘school of the fatherland’ in which all social classes were integrated and national allegiance was forged.

And yet historical analyses have proved that the army as a nationalising state-agency was not without its problems. At the turn of the twentieth century, the process of nationalisation of the masses within European armies was hampered by several factors. First, military service meant the temporary loss of crucial manpower for many families and, therefore, a severe economic disruption. In addition, a system of monetary redemption and different exemptions allowed the upper classes to pay in order to get their sons dispensed from military service. Understandably, the lower classes showed little interest in soldiering, and saw military service more as a burden for the poor than a universal duty to protect national interests. In France, for instance,

antimilitarism was prominent in rural areas and rates of draft evasion and desertion remained high throughout the entire nineteenth century.<sup>2</sup> In Italy, the ruling class did not show sufficient zeal in spreading liberal values via military service, nor the attempts of the liberal state to create a systematic plan to increase national identity among the recruits, found any success. Before WWI, indoctrination into the army remained weak and even the effort to create a soldier's handbook to promote national consciousness failed.<sup>3</sup>

The situation was very similar in Spain. As mentioned in Chapter 1, the frequent use of the army in social repression, the Moroccan War, and the maintenance of monetary redemptions perpetuated the popular classes' alienation from the army. Rejection for the military can be clearly detected in the popular press and culture, where dozens of books, theatre plays and songs denounced a conscription system that benefited the rich.<sup>4</sup> At the other end of the social ladder, the upper classes and the bourgeoisie showed little interest in contributing in person to the military. The widespread use of monetary redemptions by these sectors of the population clearly hampered interclass integration into the national ideal. Moreover, the state faced serious problems to incorporate recruits into the national army at the turn of the century. Figures of draft evaders and those declared unfit or exempted were extremely high from the time of the colonial wars in Cuba and the Philippines, and remained so during the first two decades of the century.<sup>5</sup> Notwithstanding new legislation reforming the recruitment system and reducing monetary redemptions introduced in 1911 and 1912, official figures of the period 1914-1923 show that 46% of potential recruits never joined the army, because they were declared exempted, physically unfit or they simply deserted.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Emilio de Rueda y Maestro, *Moral Militar* [Madrid, 1925], 50-51.

<sup>2</sup> For the the role of army as an agency of nationalisation in pre-WWI France see, Weber, *Peasants into Frenchmen*, 292-302.

<sup>3</sup> Gentile, *The Sacralization*, 9.

<sup>4</sup> Serrano, *El turno del pueblo* [Barcelona: 2000], 22-23; Manuel Espadas, "Orden social en la mentalidad militar española a comienzos del siglo XX", in Tuñón de Lara (ed.), *España, 1898-1936; Estructuras y Cambio*, [Madrid: 1984], 348-349.

<sup>5</sup> Serrano, *El turno*, 22-49

<sup>6</sup> The percentage of those draftees out of the total available to be soldiers for the years 1914 to 1923 are as follows: 1914: 47.42% joined the army; 1915: 50.13%; 1916: 52.39%; 1917: 54.05%; 1918: 56.70%; 1919: 58.36%; 1920: 57.09%; 1921: 56.46%; 1922: 54.60%; 1923: 56.46%. The average rate of those available for military service that finally joined the army in the period 1914-1923 is 54.365%. I have calculated the percentages from the figures for draft selection given in *Anuario Estadístico de España 1923-1924*.

It is within this context of state failure to turn the army in an institution that embodied all classes and promoted patriotic feelings among them, that the *primorriverista* use of the military as an agency of nationalisation has to be understood. For an institution that had taken over the state proclaiming that the nation was on the verge of disintegration, the employment of military service to strengthen patriotic values amongst young Spaniards was unsurprising. Once in power, Primo carried out a reform of army structures, the military educational system and the recruitment scheme in an effort to intensify and broaden the transmission of nationalist ideas amongst both soldiers and officers. Yet Primo went far beyond the classical indoctrination of recruits and used the military to spread nationalist ideas to all sectors of the civilian population. From October 1923, an army of military governmental delegates was sent throughout Spain with the specific order to spread patriotic values among all Spaniards regardless of age and gender. Throughout the dictatorship these officers published propaganda, organised patriotic lectures and arranged nationalist festivals in hundreds of towns and villages. The work of the delegates was only one part of a vast scheme of mass indoctrination that the regime favoured. The formation of a national system of pre-military, gymnastic and political education for teenagers and children was the other great *primorriverista* project. Created with the direct intervention of the dictator, the *Servicio Nacional de Educación Física Ciudadana y Preliminar* (National Service for Physical Citizenry and Pre-military Education, SNEFCP) was an army directed state organisation aimed at forging young patriots in military centres prior to their soldering.

The present chapter analyses the role of the army as an agency of mass nationalisation inside and outside the barracks during the dictatorship. The first part deals with the process of indoctrination within the army. Here it is possible to differentiate between those transformations in the education of officers, the creation of the General Military Academy in Zaragoza being the main reform of the dictatorship, and those reforms designed for the soldiers, including modifications in recruitment and military education. The second part explores military indoctrination of civilians outside the barracks, focusing, first, on the role of governmental delegates and, then, on the formation of the SNEFCP.

## INDOCTRINATION IN THE ARMY

### The military's sacred educational mission

The idea of an army-led national regeneration firmly took root in the barracks during the 25 years that preceded the dictatorship. For decades Spanish officers were educated in the belief that national regeneration was only possible if they were able to inculcate strong patriotic feelings among the population and, therefore, to 'make' better Spaniards that would, in turn, improve the fate of the fatherland. For a social group that was turning progressively more nationalist as a result of the needs of modernisation, army officers found patriotic education key in order to force the masses into accepting the ideology of the nation-state and avoid revolution from below.<sup>7</sup> As class struggle increased in Spain, so did the number of officers that advocated a dual role of the army as nationalising agency and social pacifier – in fact the two sides of the same coin. From different political approaches, echoing the regenerationist discourse, officers insisted on a better distribution of wealth combined with nationalist education as the best manner to transform society from above.<sup>8</sup> And almost invariably, this literature equated military regeneration with social regeneration. In all cases, the nationalisation of the masses aimed to stop the growth of socialist and anarchist ideas.

Like the Spanish army, nationalist doctrines taught in military academies were not monolithic. Liberal and conservative-traditionalist trends of military nationalism can also be traced in those responsible for training cadets.<sup>9</sup> Liberal military teachers emphasised values of freedom, representative government and French Enlightenment ideas as the main principles in which soldiers had to be educated; while conservative officers understood monarchy, family and religion as the unquestionable core values of the political order.<sup>10</sup> Notwithstanding the differences between both groups, it is possible to detect three major common points in post-1898 military literature. First, officers considered their educational task as sacred and presented themselves as

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<sup>7</sup> Balfour *The End*, 174-175.

<sup>8</sup> See, for instance, Eduardo Escartín, *El Ejército en la acción política* [Madrid: 1905]; Antonio García Pérez, *Militarismo y socialismo* [Madrid: 1906]; Joaquín Fanjul y Goñi, *Sociología militar* [Madrid: 1907]; Ignacio Sánchez Farragut, *Catecismo Patriótico para la Educación Moral del Soldado* (prologue by Primo de Rivera) [Madrid: 1913]; Julio Pérez Hernández, *La sociología del soldado* [Badajoz: 1921].

<sup>9</sup> Jensen, "Military Nationalism", 259-274.

<sup>10</sup> The most influential liberal work was Enrique Ruiz Fornell's *La educación moral del soldado*, [Toledo: 1894]. The book went through eight different editions, the last one in 1918. For conservative text books see Modesto Navarro García, *Máximas de la moral militar* [Madrid: 1920].

“apostles” of the nation. “The army must observe a religious cult of patriotism” in order to cultivate love for the fatherland among the soldiers, stated the progressive liberal Ruiz Fornells.<sup>11</sup> The conservative Joaquín Fanjul also talked about military nationalism as a faith with its “principles and dogmas”, and encouraged fellow officers “to preach the religion of the fatherland”.<sup>12</sup> Equally, Primo de Rivera, himself, gave voice to this belief in 1916, when he penned that the “ideal of the Fatherland” must be “sermonized and popularised religiously”.<sup>13</sup> Symptomatic of this nationalist discourse soaked in religious terms was the main role military educators accorded to the flag and the anthem as sacred representations of the fatherland. Well aware of the emotional power of symbols, army text books devoted many pages to explain the holy meaning of the national emblem. By presenting the oath of allegiance as a religious ceremony and associating the national symbol with the family, ancestors and national heroes, the army clearly attempted to inspire loyalty to the patria by appealing to emotive feelings, which in turn would foster the military values of honour, obedience, and sacrifice.<sup>14</sup> The very insistence on promoting national symbols in the army also suggests that military educators were conscious of the minimal impact patriotic emblems had on the population before recruitment.

Secondly, military literary production and press clearly show that during the Restoration army officers were fully aware of the shortcomings of the military as a ‘school of the fatherland’. The main burden was clearly monetary redemption and the lack of a truly universal conscription.<sup>15</sup> Demands for the reform of military recruitment were common among the officer corps and did nothing but increase after 1898.<sup>16</sup> In addition to universal conscription, officers stressed the need for a different kind of military instruction. Teaching in military academies and barracks was seen as ineffective, monotonous and lacking physical education. Instructors proposed to turn the emphasis from technical into moral education and the improvement of the

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<sup>11</sup> Ruiz Fornells, *La educación moral*, 116.

<sup>12</sup> Fanjul, *Sociología*, 21-22.

<sup>13</sup> Miguel Primo de Rivera, “Prologue” to García and Matta, *Elementos*, xiii.

<sup>14</sup> See, for instance, Ruiz Fornells, *La educación moral*, 110-128; Fanjul, *Sociología*, 76-91; Navarro, *Máximas*, 17, 22-41; García and Matta, *Elementos*, 37-41.

<sup>15</sup> Claims for a universal military services can be found in Ruiz Fornells, *La educación moral*, 50; Fanjul, *Sociología*, xiv; García and Matta, *Elementos*, 66-67.

<sup>16</sup> Manuel Espadas, “La institución libre de enseñanza y la formación del militar español durante la Restauración” in *Temas de historia militar*, vol. 1, [Madrid: 1982], 504



physical education system, as the way to form healthy and well-indoctrinated patriots.<sup>17</sup>

Thirdly, despite the inadequacies of the army as a nationalising agency, the officer corps demanded a further involvement in educating society. Military literature from the 1890s onwards advocated the idea that patriotic indoctrination should be at the heart of children's education. According to this view, children should be instructed in patriotic values from a very early age, first at home and then at the elementary and secondary schools. After that, military service would be the last phase of the nationalisation process. Obviously, this "educational plan" required the additional participation of the state in mass indoctrination - something neither liberal nor conservative officers seemed to object to. On the contrary, they considered the army should be leading this patriotic education outside the barracks, from elementary education all the way to military service and that it should even operate in workers circles to nationalise adults.<sup>18</sup> Different proposals for children's military education show a keen interest in forming armed battalions in state schools and public military instruction centres as a complement of the educational system.<sup>19</sup> Nationalisation of society went hand in hand with militarization of society.

By 1923, army officers had been being educated for more than 30 years in the idea that the military was failing in nationalising the masses and reforms were needed, both at the academies and the barracks. More dramatically, officers had been taught that their didactic mission should go beyond the barracks and reach the whole society. Officers increasingly began to believe in their 'sacred' role as national regenerators and considered liberal politicians as an obstacle in fulfilling their task. In turn, this perception certainly paved the way for a military takeover of the state in the name of national regeneration.

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<sup>17</sup> Fanjul, *Sociología*, 137-141.

<sup>18</sup> For the idea of promoting patriotism in working class circles as a complement to the educational system see Primo de Rivera, "Prologue" to García and Matta, *Elementos*, xi. For the promotion of nationalist values in the schools see Ruiz Fornells, *La educación*, 130; Fanjul, *Sociología*, 141-146; García and Matta, *Elementos*, 175-181; Antonio Royo, *La misión educativa del Ejército* [Madrid: 1919].

<sup>19</sup> For these plans see Fanjul, 140-150; Fornells, 1894 ed, 86-91.

## Shaping officers

Instruction and control of officers became of extreme importance if the regime wanted to succeed in nationalising the population, or indeed to assure its own political survival. Although all the different factions of the Spanish army (*junteros*, Africanists and the artillery corps) gave Primo their support in overthrowing the Restoration regime, this was more of a ceasefire between them than a proper integration under a single figure.<sup>20</sup> How the regime was able to integrate these factions was the key to the dictatorship's performance. Primo's endeavour to indoctrinate officers was twofold. On the one hand, he combined legislation and propaganda in the military clubs to unify the military doctrine under his supervision. On the other, he created the General Military Academy in Zaragoza to educate all cadets in the same doctrine and strengthen solidarity between different corps.

Government propaganda made its way into the military clubs and garrisons via conferences and publications. The dictatorship created the appropriate framework for the promotion of military publications granting them official status and distribution and, from early 1926, officers were encouraged to produce patriotic works as part of the regime's campaigns of nationalisation.<sup>21</sup> Monetary awards, official recognition and prestige seem to have been a good incentive for military authors. Literature on patriotic indoctrination flourished and an important number of new official books, addressed both to military instructors and soldiers, circulated in the barracks during the dictatorship.<sup>22</sup>

Accompanying the boom in the publication of army text books and pamphlets, the regime orchestrated a series of conferences and training courses for those officers who had educational responsibilities. Even civilians serving as reservists, the so-called *oficiales de complemento*, were considered "apostles of the fatherland" and trained to promote militarist feelings "in schools, factories, mines, workshops and the

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<sup>20</sup> Gomez-Navarro, *El régimen*, 353-359.

<sup>21</sup> RO 29-1-1926 launched the campaign of 'citizenry culture'. In *Diario Oficial de Ministerio de la Guerra* (hereafter *DOMG*), 31-1-1926, p. 249.

<sup>22</sup> Among the 'educational' books written by military officers were Teodoro Iradier Herrero, *Catecismo del Ciudadano* [Madrid: 1924]; Francisco Adán Cañizal and Antonio Tarrasa de Entrabasaguas, *Libro de Cuota*, 2 vol. [Valencia: 1926]; José Mas y Casterad, *Moral, Educación e Instrucción* [Zaragoza: 1926]; Ricardo Villalba Rubio, *Método de Instrucción Integral para el recluta y soldado de infantería* [Toledo: 1928]; Luis Pumarola Alaiz, *Democracia y Ejército* [Toledo: 1928]; Juan Plaza Ortiz, *La sociología y el Ejército* [Toledo: 1928].

countryside”.<sup>23</sup> Primo himself was at the fore of the most important campaigns, such as the 1927 conference series at the Casino de Clases in Madrid. In the opening conference, the dictator devoted his speech to explain to non-commissioned officers (NCOs) the educational role of the army in civil society. He insisted upon the sacred duty NCOs had in propagating the official tenets of ‘citizenry’ and patriotism, together with the military values of hierarchy, sacrifice, not only when instructing soldiers but also in their daily life dealing with civilians outside the garrison.<sup>24</sup> When in March 1929 the regime organised a two-week course in Toledo to teach officers how to indoctrinate civilians with patriotic ideas, the entire dictatorship’s intelligentsia was summoned. In late February, the dictator personally addressed his ideologues encouraging them to participate and, finally, Pemán, Pemartín, Aunós, Calvo Sotelo, Yanguas, and Pérez Agudo were among the lecturers on the course.<sup>25</sup>

These conferences and courses popularised an already quite simplistic official discourse and pushed forward the idea that the army must intervene in mass indoctrination outside the barracks. It is important to notice here that the impact of the conferences went far beyond those attending the meetings, since the official propaganda machinery was always keen on producing and distributing books after the events. For example, once the course in Toledo finished, the *Junta de Propaganda Patriótica* published a volume of the proceedings.<sup>26</sup> The dictator wrote the preface and ordered 20,000 copies to be printed for the first edition. Out of this first edition, almost 2000 copies were sent to military schools, libraries, clubs and barracks.<sup>27</sup> Fully aware of the importance of these centres as ‘communitative facilities’ of military society, the dictatorship showed a special interest in promoting its doctrine in these institutions.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> Emilio de Rueda, *La moral militar*, 7-8. For some other conferences see, Ramón Soto, “Conferencias para el soldado”, *Memorial de Infantería*, June 1925, n. 161, 384-390; Angel Rodríguez del Barrio “Conferencias de la guarnición de Barcelona”; idem “Conferencias de la guarnición de Barcelona. Continuación.”, *Memorial de Infantería*, December 1925, n. 167, 305-312 and 384-399.

<sup>24</sup> Miguel Primo de Rivera, *Actuación ciudadana que corresponde al Ejército*. [Madrid: 1927], 23-24.

<sup>25</sup> Primo to Antonio Horcada, 2-3-29, AHN, Presidencia del Gobierno, Bundle 190, Box 1.

<sup>26</sup> *Cursos de Ciudadanía. Conferencias pronunciadas en el Alcázar de Toledo* [Madrid: 1929]. The same was true with Primo’s conference in the NCO Club, which led to the publication of *Actuación ciudadana que corresponde al Ejército*, and the 1925 course for reservist officers with the publication of the above mentioned *La moral militar*.

<sup>27</sup> The allocation of volumes in the manuscript note entitled “Distribution of the edition of the Toledo conference course”, AHN, Presidencia del Gobierno, Bundle 190, Box 1.

<sup>28</sup> For the concept of “communitative facilities of society”, as the centres of culture where nationalist ideas are shaped and spread see Deutsch, *Nationalism*, 86-106.

Government propaganda was combined with legislation to gain control of the military clubs. A Royal Order of 24 April 1926 placed the elected governing boards of the clubs under direct supervision of the Military Governor of the region. It also created a formula to give state ownership to those buildings and libraries, as payment for the functioning of the clubs. Further legislation in 1927 created a new statute for all military cultural centres. The Circular Royal Order of 13 April 1927 stated that the government aimed to strengthen the “union and comradeship among all Arms, Corps, and Institutes in the Army and the Navy” and promote culture and gymnastics among officers.<sup>29</sup> However, it was more limitation than enlightenment that the regime sought with the new law. Primo knew the essential role that the clubs had played in the formation and development of the military Juntas and was resolved to avoid any political discontent emerging from the centres. Art. 4 forbade “all political and religious discussions, and any other that undermines or damages military law or discipline”. In a time when some cracks in the military alliance were clear, as shown by the 1926 insurrection of the *Sanjuanada* and the revolt in the artillery corps, the dictatorship decided that only its ‘apolitical’ propaganda would be allowed to circulate in the clubs in order to reach a unity of doctrine among the officers.

Primo’s search for unity of doctrine and comradeship among corps was to find momentum with the creation of the General Military Academy of Zaragoza (AGM) in 1927. The idea of an academy in which cadets from all different corps studied for two years together had been implemented in the AGM of Toledo between 1882 and 1893. Although closed suddenly by the liberal Minister of War, General López Domínguez, due to the pressures of his fellow artillery officers, the first epoch of the AGM contributed to draw the army together and increased inter-arms solidarity.<sup>30</sup> This was something Primo knew well, since the dictator had been a cadet in Toledo, together with some other key members of his regime, such as Barrera, Sanjurjo, Berenguer, and Cavalcanti.<sup>31</sup> Reforms in military education and the reopening of the AGM were soon on the *primorriverista* agenda. In February 1924, Primo announced his intention of creating a new military general academy and, in September that year, a committee was formed to study the re-organisation of military education. From 1924 on, the regime also sent officers abroad to investigate different educational models in military

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<sup>29</sup> ROC 13-4-27, *Colección Legislativa del Ejército* (hereafter *CLE*), 1927, N 198, 250-252.

<sup>30</sup> Roberto Sánchez Abal, *La enseñanza militar en el reinado de Alfonso XII* [Madrid: 1989], 132.

<sup>31</sup> Julio Busquets, *El militar de carrera en España*, [Barcelona: 1984], 80.

academies. Colonel Millán Astray went to the French academies of Saint Cyr and Saint Maixent, whilst Lieutenant Colonel Fermín Espallargar travelled to the USA. But it was the dissolution of the Artillery corps, and the subsequent closure of the artillery academy in Segovia in 1926, that finally made the creation of the AGM an urgent necessity.<sup>32</sup>

The Royal Decree of 20 February 1927 established the new AGM in Zaragoza with the specific aim of providing “a common military spirit in all corps”.<sup>33</sup> The law highlighted “moral instruction and education” of cadets as one of the main goals of the academy in order to achieve unity of military doctrine. In other words, the regime thought that a fervent moral teaching would first lead to solidarity among the officers and eventually to strong indoctrination of soldiers under the same military principles. The conditions for entering the academy did not radically differ from those established in the 1880s, nor did the subjects taught. Yet when comparing the original programme of 1882 to the one of the 1920s, it is possible to detect an increasing emphasis in those subjects designed to promote national consciousness, such as Spanish history and civil and military law.<sup>34</sup>

Probably the most relevant factor in understanding the sort of education Primo wanted in the army has to do with the team the dictator selected to direct the AGM. Initially, Primo considered Millán Astray for the post of director. Millán had previously taught in the Infantry Academy in Toledo, where he instructed cadets in *bushido* (the samurai code). Furthermore, as chief of the Spanish Legion, Millán educated his soldiers in a blend of irrational principles, military symbolism and theatrical liturgies, extremely similar to those of Fascism.<sup>35</sup> But the many enemies Millán had within the army, especially among the *junteros*, made the dictator think twice. It was then when Primo decided to give the post to another Africanist officer, Brigadier General Francisco Franco.<sup>36</sup> Franco had participated in the formative phase of the new AGM too. Like Millán, he had been sent to the École Militaire de Saint Cyr in a study trip. In March 1927, Franco was called to be part of the committee

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<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, 82.

<sup>33</sup> RD 20-2-1927, *CLE*, 1927, N.94, 119-124.

<sup>34</sup> The instructions and programmes of the AGM were developed by the ROC 17-12-27, *CLE*, 1927, n. 534, 634-640. The 1882 programme in Sánchez Abal, *La enseñanza*, 106-110.

<sup>35</sup> Carlos Blanco Escolá, *La Academia Militar de Zaragoza (1928-1931)* [Barcelona: 1989], 92-106.

<sup>36</sup> Gabriel Cardona, “La reforma de la enseñanza militar en la II República (1931-1932)”, in Julio Busquets and Valentina Fernández Vargas (eds.), *La enseñanza militar en España* [Madrid: 1986], 70.

formed to create the new academy and in January 1928 he was named director of the AGM.<sup>37</sup>

As a student in the Infantry Academy in Toledo Franco had achieved only very poor results but, once in Morocco, he had been quickly promoted in the officer ranks due to the fact that he was Sanjurjo's protégé.<sup>38</sup> The educational skills of the would-be dictator had been developed in Africa, where Franco had co-founded the Legion with Millán Astray in 1920. As the second in command of the *Tercio de Extranjeros*, he soon got a reputation for the brutal punishment of his own men and the widespread use of terror 'against civilians and soldiers alike. The colonial experience was certainly incorporated into the life of the AGM, where Franco formed the teaching team with his Africanist friends.<sup>39</sup> The director himself wrote the Decalogue of the academy following the Decalogue of the Legion and the eighteenth century Military Ordinances of Charles III.<sup>40</sup> The Decalogue perfectly illustrates Franco's mentality as a mixture of fascist rhetoric and medieval military idealism. The "Ten Commands of the AGM" emphasised patriotism, loyalty to the king, discipline, courage and sacrifice, as supreme moral values that had to be exteriorised in everyday life.<sup>41</sup> The aim was to turn the cadets into a sort of "Soldier-Knights" of the Spanish Golden Age, based on a vulgarised version of the 'baroque discourse' of Patria, Poetry and Purity that the *primorriverista* ideologues were promoting.<sup>42</sup>

The education given in the AGM was pure indoctrination. It was not only that the Africanists who taught in Zaragoza exalted fascist and militarist principles, but also that their educational techniques led to the irrational manipulation of the cadets.<sup>43</sup> Most of the Africanists had no educational training whatsoever and they merely applied in Zaragoza the brutal conductivist methods learnt in the colonies. Moreover, Franco selected teachers according to their war experience in Morocco, rather than

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<sup>37</sup> Paul Preston, *Franco. 'Caudillo de España'* [Barcelona: 1998], 79.

<sup>38</sup> Franco also received support from Alfonso XIII in his rapid ascent into the top ranks. Balfour, *Deadly*, 157.

<sup>39</sup> Among them Camilo Alonso Vega, Francisco Franco-Salgado, Rafael López Varela, Sueiro, Bartolomé Barba Hernández, and Emilio Esteban Infantes. Preston, *Franco*, 83.

<sup>40</sup> Blanco, *La Academia*, 49.

<sup>41</sup> The Decalogue of the AGM in *Ibid.*, 168-169. For Franco's fascist and baroque rhetoric, 102-104.

<sup>42</sup> For the baroque discourse see Chapter 3.

<sup>43</sup> It should be clarified that not all Africanists officers in Morocco shared this mentality. A minority within the Army of Africa were 'enlightened Africanists' who felt a genuine attraction towards Moroccan culture. Yet those who Franco handpicked to teach at the AGM belonged to a new generation of colonial officers imbued in Prussian militarism and a new right-wing nationalist mystique, with the exception of Miguel Campins, vice-director of the AGM. Balfour, *Deadly*, 160-164.

their knowledge of the subjects they had to teach.<sup>44</sup> This certainly created a pedagogic environment that while concentrating on 'moral' and physical education subordinated technical and theoretical instruction. No wonder that Ramón Franco accused his brother in a private letter of giving the cadets a "troglodyte education".<sup>45</sup> Highlighting moral education as the supreme edification for cadets was much in line with Primo's conception of military formation as spiritual instruction. The aim was to promote a messianic nationalism, which sought a permanent state of emotional fervour in the cadets. In this respect, the selection of the Africanists to rule officers' education was no coincidence. Their anti-intellectual stance made them ideal to indoctrinate soldiers under the *primorriverista* guidelines.<sup>46</sup>

It was precisely this fanatical indoctrination of cadets in authoritarian values, among other things, that led the republican Minister of War, Manuel Azaña, to close down the AGM in July 1931, as part of a general plan to reform the army.<sup>47</sup> Notwithstanding the relatively short life of the AGM, its historical legacy is significant. The 'unity of military doctrine' to consolidate the regime that Primo sought with the creation of the AGM could not be achieved, since the first promotion graduated in July 1930 once the dictatorship had fallen. On the contrary the creation of the AGM deepened the fractures within the army during the dictatorship. The unification of studies had been a long-standing demand of the *junteros*, who understandably enough did not like the Africanists' monopoly of the AGM. As for the artillery, always proud of their separate education as an elite, the AGM only added insult to injury. After Primo's dissolution of the corps and the closure of their academy with the king's acquiescence, artillery officers turned towards republicanism.

In the long term, the consequences of the AGM were dramatic. During his years in Zaragoza, Franco cemented the group of loyal officers, who would in time rebel with him against the democratic Republic in 1936. Many of the cadets educated in the AGM would eventually join the *Falange* in the 1930s and almost all of them fought under Franco in the Civil War.<sup>48</sup> When in 1942 the AGM was re-opened, Franco reinstalled the same educational model he had created during Primo's

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<sup>44</sup> Busquets, *El militar*, 81.

<sup>45</sup> Quoted in Cardona, "La reforma", 70-71.

<sup>46</sup> Blanco, *La Academia*, 176, 196-197.

<sup>47</sup> Busquets, *El militar*, 84.

<sup>48</sup> Preston, *Franco*, 83-84.

dictatorship – only incorporating a few new elements both at the discursive level (i. e. vicious anti-Azaña attacks) and liturgical ceremonies (e. g. adoption of the Fascist salute).<sup>49</sup> In the opening ceremony on 2 December 1942, Franco insisted that it was the duty of the army to transmit its values to the rest of society.<sup>50</sup> At the heart of the Francoist ideological justification for reopening the AGM lay the *primorriverista* belief that the army must shape civil society.

### Shaping ‘Citizen-Soldiers’

When in 1925 the Chief of the Infantry Instruction Battalion, Major Emilio de Rueda y Maestro, addressed the reservist officers in a course, he stated patriotic indoctrination had to be the main priority in the barracks. Since family and the schooling had failed in the process of nationalisation, the argument went, it was then the army the main agency called on to indoctrinate citizens in patriotism during military service.<sup>51</sup> The army’s potential for the task was certainly appreciated:

“Sirs, Have you ever considered that over the next ten years time approximately one million Spaniards will complete military service? Let us dream....One million Spaniards!... Imagine that those men when they leave the barracks for the last time take away embedded in their brains the idea of the fatherland.”<sup>52</sup>

Deploying Fichte’s views on the power of patriotic ideas and the need to propagate them, Rueda concluded: “[The army must] bring to the most remote corners of the Peninsula the emotion of unity among the individuals and the bodies which constitute the nation [...] emotion that, with the passing of time, *produces the illusion of the anthropological unity, of the unity of origin*”.<sup>53</sup> Rueda’s conference perfectly illustrates the regimen’s perception of military service as a tool of mass nationalisation. First, the *primorriverista* army was aware of the shortcomings of the process in the past and firmly convinced of the utility of military service as a means of

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<sup>49</sup> Cardona, “La reforma”, 79-80.

<sup>50</sup> Blanco, *La Academia*, 194.

<sup>51</sup> Rueda, *Moral Militar*, 44-52.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*, 50-51.

<sup>53</sup> Italics added. *Ibid.*, 57.



solving the 'patriotic deficit'. Second, they knew that national feeling could be artificially created and imposed upon the youth while soldering.

Reforms were needed if the military was to successfully transmit its values to soldiers. As shown above, one of the foremost problems of the army was that almost half of the potential conscripts never enrolled. In addition, partial exemptions continued to exist hampering interclass integration. Soon after seizing power, Primo reformed the recruitment system. The Royal Decree of 29 March 1924 stated the need for creating a modern army so as to mobilise large sectors of the population, following the lessons of WWI. Aiming at a considerable rise in the numbers of those doing their military service, the decree reduced the possibilities of being exempted for reason of physical or psychological deficiency and toughened the penalties for deserters.<sup>54</sup> It also set out to create a strong reservist corps not only for reasons of defence but to indoctrinate citizens during peacetime. Furthermore, the decree provided the NCOs with the possibility of becoming schoolteachers via special training.<sup>55</sup> In the words of the legislator, the soldier-teacher would "bring to the state schools [...] the patriotic spirit, the habits of discipline and the love for the armed institutions, paving the way in the infants' minds for the idea that serving the Patria in arms is not only a duty but a honourable right".<sup>56</sup>

If we are to consider the total numbers of those enrolled in the army, the *primorriverista* reforms were a partial success. The percentage of those potential recruits actually joining military service steadily increased during the dictatorship. In 1923 the percentage of draftees joining the army was 56.46%. By 1930, the figure had risen to 62.66%.<sup>57</sup> The explanation for this growth lies in different factors. First, a broader conception of those fitted to join the army sent many to serve in "auxiliary services" in the barracks. Self-mutilation of fingers and toes, a widespread practice before, might now not ensure being declared unfit. More importantly, the military control of the municipalities via *delegados* ensured the recruitment process was not manipulated by the *caciques*. Thus the possibilities of falsifying family circumstances in order to be exempted substantially decreased. In addition, since the very beginning

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<sup>54</sup> RD, 29-3-1924, *DOMG*, 30-3-1924, 985-993.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*, Base 11. The NCO were required an "special training" in the teacher training colleges (*escuelas normales*) to get the Qualified Teacher Degree.

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*, "Exposición".

<sup>57</sup> Figures for the period 1923-1930 are as follows: 1923: 56.43%; 1924: 58.45%; 1925: 59.90%; 1926: 61.49%; 1927: 64.53%; 1928: 60.93%; 1929: 61.60%; 1930: 62.66%. Data in *Anuario Estadístico de España, 1931*.

of the regime the *delegados* made clear in public addresses that desertion was a crime of lese-Patria. They encouraged public denunciations of deserters and their prosecution became more common.<sup>58</sup> Finally, the ‘pacification’ of the Protectorate and the resulting decrease in the number of Spanish troops in Africa might have had an impact on those previously reluctant to die in the Moroccan war.

If figures show us the steady increase in those receiving military indoctrination, in terms of soldiers’ “educational value” the success of the *primorriverista* reforms is much more dubious. In the name of modernisation the *primorriverista* reform reduced the length of the military service from three to two years, which obviously abridged the time for indoctrination within the barracks.<sup>59</sup> Not less important was Primo’s decision to maintain the partial monetary redemptions. This allowed serving for just nine months to those who could afford it, paying different quantities according to their family or personal income.<sup>60</sup> Thus the old officers’ demand of achieving a truly universal military service was never accomplished under Primo and the gap between upper and middle classes and the lower classes remained.

The dictator tried to justify the monetary redemptions arguing that they were based on the soldiers’ cultural capacities and portrayed the pecuniary emancipation as a mere “complementary economic measure”.<sup>61</sup> No one could seriously believe it. Even officers close to the dictator publicly acknowledged that the maintenance of monetary redemptions was due to the state’s need of money to fund the army.<sup>62</sup> As a result, Infantry Major Luis Pumarola admitted, the “reduced service of the soldier in the barracks” did not allow a “scrupulous education on military morality.”<sup>63</sup> More criticism of the effects of both the reduction and the redemption came from inside and outside the military in the subsequent years. Gabriel Maura, for instance, denounced the redemptions as a “flagrant injustice”, which led to the “unavoidable failure of the

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<sup>58</sup> Martínez Anido to all Civil Governors, “Prevenciones que para el mejor desempeño de sus cargos deben tener presentes los Delegados Gubernativo”, 7-12-1923, AGA, Sección Interior, Box 149, Folder 15. The RO 12-11-1923 and RD 29-3-1924 hardened the penalties for deserters and awarded denunciations of runaways. Seeking rewards, it seems that many people denounced almost everyone suspected to be deserters. In April 1924, the government had to remind the public that no awards would be given if the person denounced had been previously declared physically or mentally unfit or exempted by the army. Royal Circular Order (hereafter RCO) 15-4-1924, *CLE*, 1924, N176, 258.

<sup>59</sup> Miguel Primo de Rivera, *La obra de la dictadura* [Madrid: 1930], 26.

<sup>60</sup> Quantities for temporal redemption oscilated between 5,000 and 500 pesetas. RD 29-3-1924, Base 9, *DOMG*, 30-3-1924, 985-993..

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*, “Exposición”.

<sup>62</sup> Pumarola, *Democracia*, 94-98.

educational mission aimed at by the dictator”.<sup>64</sup> General Mola suggested Primo’s decisions were motivated by political exigencies and summarized the officers’ dissatisfaction with the measures as follows:

“...with the reduction of service and the facilities given to obtain the monetary redemption, difficulties in instruction and in the number of individuals with deficient war preparation rose, so that only the miserably poor felt obliged to continued soldiering full-time and to suffer the pains of the African campaign. All these measures, intended to gain support from big opinion sectors, were extremely detrimental for the Army’s efficiency, without gaining, in exchange, the political support aimed for.”<sup>65</sup>

To be sure, the regime tried to promote a new type of education on military bases. This new model aimed to politically indoctrinate soldiers while taking into consideration the reduction of serving time. Already the early 1924 reforms established that all Spaniards must “acquire a strong martial spirit” during their soldiering.<sup>66</sup> Subsequent annual programmes incorporated the official principles into the soldiers’ “moral” educational programmes, which included the teaching of concepts such as love for the fatherland, the king and the flag, heroism, obedience, honour, and civil duties.<sup>67</sup>

The 1927 General Instruction Plan provides a good example of how important indoctrination in the barracks had become for the regime. It divided military education into three different areas: technical, tactical and moral. It established that “moral education” was an integral part of soldier’s formation and therefore should be taught throughout his tour of duty. According to the plan, the instructor should not only promote martial moral values in those lectures devoted to them, but also take advantage of such didactic occasions as those “presented by real life, not forgetting that such practical lessons are engraved more deeply in the rough soldiers’ intelligences, than arid conferences”.<sup>68</sup> This patronising, didactic approach was

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<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*, 99.

<sup>64</sup> Maura Gamazo, *Al servicio de la historia*, vol 2, 53.

<sup>65</sup> Emilio Mola Vidal, *Obras Completas* [Valladolid: 1940], 1029.

<sup>66</sup> RD 29-3-1924, *DOMG*, 30-3-1924, 985-993.

<sup>67</sup> RCO 1-12-1929, *Diario Oficial del Ministerio del Ejército* (hereafter *DOME*), 1929, N 267, 599-607.

<sup>68</sup> RCO 17-2-1927, *CLE*, 1927, N 83, 97-101.

combined with other structural changes in the army, which sought to frame a more efficient educational system. Thus the Royal Decree of 1 January 1927, gathered the inferior units (*pelotón*, *sección* and *compañía*) in single battalions with the goal of turning the latter units into “permanent schools of instruction”.<sup>69</sup> Moreover, temporary schools (*unidad escuela*) were planned in every military region aiming to improve military-educational performance.<sup>70</sup>

Fully aware of the different political positions within the army, the regime laid stress on the need to achieve a “unity of doctrine” in those principles to be taught to soldiers, which in reality meant to homogenously reproduce the official authoritarian canon.<sup>71</sup> Since the beginning of the regime new teaching manuals for officers and text books for soldiers were published in ever increasing numbers and publications rocketed after the 1926 governmental campaign to produce “patriotic books”.<sup>72</sup> As shown above, these nationalist works were widely circulated in military garrisons by the Bureau of the President (*Secretaría Auxiliar de la Presidencia del Consejo de Ministros*), although the government also proved itself keen on subsidizing extreme right-wing charities to distribute them. This was, for instance, the case with the *Patronato Social de Buenas Lecturas*, a charity founded by the Marquis of Comillas, the Count of Cerralbo and Vázquez de Mella, which received public money from the *Diputación de Barcelona* to donate books from its collection, *Biblioteca Patria*, to barracks, hospitals and prisons.<sup>73</sup>

These works essentially popularised nationalist, authoritarian, irrational and interventionist ideas, which had become paramount among the officer class in the years prior to the dictatorship. Yet the fact that these ideas had become official doctrine and were now intensively promoted among the soldiers made the transformation of the army into a vehicle of mass indoctrination all the more remarkable. This new military literature was no longer the reflection of a mounting stream of discontent within an institution at odds with the liberal state, but the official propaganda of a military dictatorship in which the army effectively controlled the

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<sup>69</sup> RD 31-12-1926, *DOMG*, 1-1-1927, N1, 4-5.

<sup>70</sup> RD 31-12-1926, *DOMG*, 1-1-1927, N1, 4-5; RCO 12-1-1927, *DOMG*, 13-1-1927, N9, 123-124.

<sup>71</sup> On the “unity of doctrine” see RCO 18-2-1927, *CLE*, 1927, N 89, 114-117; RO 29-1-1926, *DOMG*, 31-1-1926, N 24, 249; RO 24-1-1927, *DOMG*, 13-1-1927, 123-124.

<sup>72</sup> The campaign to produce patriotic books was officially launched by the RD 29-10-1926, *DOMG*, 31-1-1926, 249.

<sup>73</sup> See José Co y Borrell to Diputación de Barcelona, 8-2-1928. The Diputación granted 1000 pesetas to the Patronato. Documents in Arxiu General Diputació Provincial de Barcelona (hereafter ADPB), Departament de Instrucció Pública, Bundle 4184, File 42.

state apparatus. Proposals for change now had real possibilities of being realised. As explained in Chapter 2, notorious among the new ideas of *primorriverista* military literature was the need to shape a “New Man” in the form of the “Citizen-Soldier”. The most ambitious plans envisaged this ‘New Spaniard’ as being educated from childhood in nationalist and militarist values in state-controlled schools, followed by pre-military academies and, finally, military service as the last step in the making of the Citizen-Soldier.<sup>74</sup> Once the process of indoctrination was complete, he had to act as a “good citizen”. And this, in the words of the military writers, meant that he had to adore the leader of the nation, join the Somatén, participate in patriotic ceremonies, help local authorities, and politically mobilise himself for the regime.<sup>75</sup> It almost goes without saying that these views presented regime, army, and nation as intrinsically linked, in an attempt to monopolise the idea of Spain. The army had been turned not only into a key state agency devoted to propagate patriotism, but also into an official organisation seeking to attract support for the *primorriverista* regime.

In the ‘patriotic’ battle for the hearts and minds of young Spaniards leftist ideas became the main enemy and the conquest of the rural masses the foremost goal. The director of the Infantry Academy, José Villalba Riquelme, drew a neat line when dividing the bulk of soldiers into peasants and urban proletarians:

“...the former, the most healthy and robust and with scarce education, constitute the main mass in Spain; the difficulty in the instruction of these recruits lays in their simplicity and lack of culture, but on the other hand their moral and physical development is better, since they are not contaminated by the atmosphere of the factory, the mine, or the political meeting. The latter, with greater culture, and with easily learnt skills in the use of war machinery, are infected with alcohol and socialist predicaments.”<sup>76</sup>

It is highly significant that those in charge of military education emphasised the importance of indoctrinating peasants as opposed to urban workers. The regime

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<sup>74</sup> See Adán, *Ciudadanía*, 97-104; Mas, *Moral*, 3-8; Pumarola, *Democracia*, 52; Villalba Rubio, *Método de instrucción*, 14.

<sup>75</sup> Mas, *Moral*, 13-16.

<sup>76</sup> José Villalba Riquelme, Prologue to Villalba Rubio, *Método de instrucción*, v-vi. A very similar distinction between countryside and urban recruits was made by Infantry Major Oscar Nevado, “El oficial en el cuartel en relación con inferiores, iguales y superiores”, *Memorial de Infantería*, vol. 25, January 1924.

saw the agrarian masses as a vast non-politicised social group, which should be indoctrinated by the state before the Left could gain active support from them. Even the most humble members of society were now considered important for indoctrination. In this sense, it is easy to understand the efforts made by military propagandists to increase the number of illiterate soldiers joining the regimental schools in the barracks.<sup>77</sup> According to military instructors, the key was in selectively teaching soldiers and providing them with a carefully chosen range of books, so they did not follow “negative propaganda”.<sup>78</sup> Some officers even demanded educating military instructors in modern sociology so they could effectively argue against soldiers’ socialist ideas in the barracks.<sup>79</sup> The goals behind this policy were twofold. First, reduction of illiteracy would mean a better-educated population and this would eventually improve national production. Second, if a certain cultural level was provided in the army according to nationalist principles, the chances of the lower classes being attracted by Socialist or Anarchist propaganda would be severely reduced. It should be noted here that this attempt to indoctrinate and mobilise the lower classes via military service signalled an abrupt breach with the Restoration’s conservative policies of mass de-mobilisation. Unlike conservative politicians, often too intimidated by the masses, the *primorriveristas* sought to incorporate them into the system via political indoctrination.

An essential component in the formation of the “New Man” was to endow Spaniards with a strong physique. Improving the strength of the ‘race’ had been part of military plans in the decade prior to the dictatorship. Following social-Darwinist principles, military officers had come to the conclusion that the survival of the fittest applied to nations and races as well as individuals and, therefore, nations needed strong men to defend the fatherland and, ultimately, to stay alive.<sup>80</sup> It hardly needs to be said that these officers understood that the army was the proper institution to deliver physical education inside and outside the barracks. The problem enthusiasts of gymnastics faced was that physical education was in a state of total disarray in the military garrisons. José Villalba Riquelme, director of the Infantry Academy, was the

<sup>77</sup> See, for instance, Mas, *Educación*, 9; and Adán, *Ciudadanía*, 46. For the regulation of the simultaneous teaching of reading and writing in the regimental schools see ROC 12-8-1927, *CLE*, 1927, N 338, 422.

<sup>78</sup> Adán, *Ciudadanía*, 47.

<sup>79</sup> Plaza, *La sociología y el Ejército*, 253-254.

<sup>80</sup> Eduardo de los Reyes Sanz, *El Ejército y su influencia en la Educación Física Nacional* [Manresa: 1921], i-viii.

most active officer in seeking to improve of physical education in the army. A man always aware of new European educational initiatives, Colonel Villalba created a special unit in the Infantry Academy for the teaching of physical exercise and in 1911 he organised a tour to study the teaching of gymnastics at different military academies around the continent. The conclusions of the report produced upon his return urged for the creation of a physical education teaching college for both soldiers and civilians in Spain.<sup>81</sup> But despite the efforts of Villalba and his colleagues, very little was done in the years before the dictatorship. As bitterly described in a text book for physical education instructors published in 1923, physical education in the garrisons was absolutely overlooked and NCOs without any sort of previous training were those in charge of organising and overseeing soldiers' physical exercise.<sup>82</sup>

Improvement of physical education training soon became an important goal of the dictatorship. The regime not only upgraded the level of gymnastics in recruits' study plans but also attempted to professionally train officers and NCOs in the teaching of physical education.<sup>83</sup> In the quest for professional instructors, the regime transformed the Military Institute of Physical Education into the Central School of Gymnastics in 1924. The old Institute, an organisation linked to the Infantry Academy, was then turned into a semi-independent military college devoted to the training of officers and NCOs.<sup>84</sup> By 1927, the dictator established that only military officers with a degree in gymnastics could be in charge of physical education in the barracks. NCOs working as instructors' aides were also required to have been educated at the Central School of Gymnastics.<sup>85</sup>

The scope of the modernisation drive in the teaching of physical education became clear when in May 1925 the government announced its intention to implement the gymnastic military model in the whole of society. According to Primo, after the experience of the Great War, the teaching of physical and pre-military education had become a must in Europe. He proclaimed "the need to apply the Central School of Gymnastics unity of doctrine to all state, provincial and local educational centres, as well as to all private societies and clubs which had any sort of

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<sup>81</sup> Federico González Deleito, *La educación física en Suecia* [Toledo: 1911].

<sup>82</sup> Augusto Condo González, *Manual del Instructor de Gimnasia* [Toledo: 1923], 3-10.

<sup>83</sup> The 1927 Infantry Instruction Plan promoted physical education and gunmanship at the expense of more theoretical study of military tactics. ROC, 18-2-1927, *CLE*, 1927, N 89, 114-117.

<sup>84</sup> ROC 28-4-1924, *CLE*, 1924, N 201 and ROC 25-2-1925, *CLE*, 1925, N 46, 69.

<sup>85</sup> ROC 4-7-1927, *CLE*, 1927, N 281.

relationship with public centres”.<sup>86</sup> In order to frame a coherent plan to extend patriotic gymnastics throughout the entire educational system, the regime created an inter-ministerial commission, presided over by (then General) Villalba. The commission had the task of structuring the physical education training blueprint for both military and civilian teachers and the creation of a centralised agency, the National Committee, to co-ordinate moral and physical education outside the barracks.<sup>87</sup> Villalba knew the task was immense. As he put it in an internal report, physical education was virtually non-existent in schools and gymnastic, sport and shooting associations had no single doctrine, method, or procedure to promote pre-military education. It was a question of “creating a whole brand new system”.<sup>88</sup>

We will later in the chapter return to the question of pre-military education, but let us focus here on the training of military teachers. In 1925, Villalba considered the Central School of Gymnastics to be the only institution capable of properly shaping gymnastics teachers, and yet, he acknowledged, “at present it cannot have an important impact due to its scarce resources and economic means.”<sup>89</sup> He proposed sending a research team to different European military academies to come up with the ideal educational plan for Spain. Not without reservations due to its high economic cost, the proposal was finally approved and in the spring of 1926 and a team of three members of the inter-ministerial commission visited military academies in France, Italy, Sweden and Germany.<sup>90</sup> Yet progress was bound to be slow. Although the Central School drafted a new statute for the physical instruction of troops unifying the “doctrine” of the different corps in the army, by 1927 it had yet to be passed and the 1911 Provisional Infantry Gymnastic Statute remained official legislation.<sup>91</sup>

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<sup>86</sup> RD 8-5-1925, *CLIP*, 1925, 253-257.

<sup>87</sup> *Ibid.*, 256-257.

<sup>88</sup> Villalba’s report on the Commission, July 1925 (no day specified), AHN, Presidencia, Bundle 217, Box 3, Folder 178.

<sup>89</sup> Villalba’s report on the Commission, AHN, Presidencia, Bundle 217, Box 3, Folder 178.

<sup>90</sup> See General Navarro’s report to the *Consejo de Ministros*, 21-10-1925, AHN, Presidencia, Bundle 217, Box 3, Folder 178; ROC 11-11-1925, *Gaceta*, 12-11-1925; Villalba to Presidencia del Gobierno, 14-11-1925, AHN, Presidencia, Bundle 217, Box 3, Folder 178. The conclusions of the investigation came in a report by Joaquín Aguilera dated 14 June 1926. The report was partially published two years later in the pamphlet *Memoria sobre la organización de la Educación Física en Francia, Alemania, Suecia e Italia* [Madrid: 1928].

<sup>91</sup> José Villalba Riquelme, *Organización de la Educación física e Instrucción premilitar en Francia, Suecia, Alemania e Italia* [Madrid: 1927], 45



The number of officers joining courses at the Central School of Gymnastics doubled during the dictatorship, rising from 32 in 1923 to 64 in 1929.<sup>92</sup> But for all the significance that the Central School of Gymnastics gained in *primorriverista* plans, the reality was that the number of officers and NCOs graduating from the school was simply not enough to substantially improve the instruction of physical education in the army. According to Villalba, a total of 220 officers and 200 sergeants had become teachers and instructors respectively in the period 1919-1927.<sup>93</sup> In other words, assuming that all graduates at the Central School were teaching physical education, by the late 1920s the Spanish army had approximately one teacher and one instructor per 1,000 soldiers. In addition, the economic conditions of the garrisons remained terribly poor throughout the dictatorship. By 1930, soldiers still lacked the most basic equipment and facilities for practicing physical exercise.<sup>94</sup>

Together with moral indoctrination and physical education, the dictatorship was keen to promote patriotic rituals and reinforce national symbolism in the barracks. *Primorriverista* military text books insisted on the importance of making the recruits feel an emotional attachment to national symbolism. The regime's obsession with the "unity of doctrine" was matched only by the *primorriverista* passion for unifying national symbols. In March 1925, the regime imposed a single military uniform for the entire army in order to increase the sense of belonging to the same national institution.<sup>95</sup> Two years later, a Royal Decree established that the merchant ships had to sail under the same flag as the navy. The government justified the change arguing that, firstly, maritime sailors had demanded the unification and, secondly, that Spaniards living overseas had complained to the Directory that when they saw the merchant ships they could not see "the genuine flag of the Fatherland".<sup>96</sup> With this unification the regime completed a phase, which had began in 1843 with the appropriation of the Royal Navy insignia as the national flag. The red and yellow flag of the monarchy had progressively been adopted by all state agencies, and the merchant navy was the last Spanish institution with other colours. It did not, however,

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<sup>92</sup> For the number of officers in the 1923 course see *Escuela Central de Gimnasia. Memoria de los Cursos 1920-1921, 1923* [Toledo: 1924], 72. For the number of officers in 1929 see Circular, "Cursos de Gimnasia", *DOMÉ*, 14-7-1929.

<sup>93</sup> Villalba, *Organización de la educación física*, 45.

<sup>94</sup> For the precarious situation of the garrisons see Eugenio Egea Urraco, "Instrucción Militar obligatoria", *Memorial de Infantería*, January 1930, n. 216, 39-45.

<sup>95</sup> ROC 31-3-1925, *CLE*, n. 83, 126-128.

<sup>96</sup> RD 19-7-1927, *CLE*, 1927, n. 296, 372-373.

bring an end to the conflict regarding the national flag. As is well known, Republicans remained loyal to the red, yellow and violet tricolour flag, workers kept on waving their red and black insignias and peripheral nationalists preferred their own flags to the Spanish one.

In line with its efforts at doctrinal and symbolic unification, the regime also attempted to regulate military ceremonies within the barracks. The most important of all, the Oath to the Flag, was radically transformed during the dictatorship. In early 1924, Primo decided that the national standard was not to be kept in the barracks anymore and ordered the recruits to “take their military sacrament under the sun, together with their fellow citizens”, effectively turning the oath to the flag into a popular ceremony.<sup>97</sup> The Royal Decree of 31 March 1924 was unambiguous. It ordered military authorities to organise a public commemoration of the pledge to the national flag aiming to unite soldiers and the people “in a single will”. The government also declared the celebration a “National Day” and established that all state buildings, schools, universities, seminars, garrisons and military and civilian boats had to display the Spanish flag to commemorate this patriotic festival. In search of a public communion between the people and the soldiers, in which the national emblem became a sacred item, the decree was self-explanatory:

“In order to endow the oath with that popular support that cannot be officially legislated and enforced, Authorities must organise the fiesta (because this day must be a celebration of the Fatherland) in a way which contributes to exalt the masses’ love for the Flag, itself the representation of national honour and the emblem in which all Spanish regions merge”.

The regime wasted no time in implementing the new legislation. In early April 1924, the king presided over a massive ceremony in which hundreds of recruits pledged their allegiance to the national flag in the *Paseo de la Castellana* in Madrid.<sup>98</sup> Integration of the masses into military public ceremonies went a step further the following year with the creation of the Festival of Graduating Soldiers. The Military Directory, attempting to assimilate civic, military and religious rites into a nationalist ceremony, invented the ritual via royal order. The first act was to be a public mass

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<sup>97</sup> RD 31-3-1924, *CLE*, 1924, n. 128, 188.

with the presence of one infantry, one cavalry, and one artillery battalion. Following the mass, the military governor had to give a speech reminding the soldiers of the significance of their vow to the patria and their duties outside the barracks. After the speech, the soldiers, wearing festive uniforms, had to march and bless the flag while the military band played martial music.<sup>99</sup>

In seeking to assure public success, the Festival of Graduating Soldiers was declared a public holiday. Under the Military Governor's command, the entire ceremony was to take place in front of civil and ecclesiastical authorities. Moreover, members of trade, industrial and agricultural associations were to be invited, together with workers' unions and any other "local prestigious corporations". There is little doubt that the dictatorship attempted to turn this ceremony into an all-class integration ritual, in which the army remained the 'sacramental administrator'. It is telling that the religious character of this nationalist ceremony was emphasised with the incorporation of a Catholic mass, a very well-known ritual among Spaniards. Indeed, the military governor's speech and the soldiers' kissing of the flag were reminiscent of the priest's sermon and the congregation's communion in the Catholic mass. But it is also worth noting that here the Catholic ritual was performed in order to 'sacralize' a national item (i. e. the flag) and was part of a broader patriotic ceremony. In this ceremony, the fatherland, and not the Christian God, was the supreme divinity celebrated. In the same manner that the ideologues of the regime drew selectively from Catholic doctrine in order to frame official nationalist discourse, the dictatorship openly incorporated Catholic rituals into nation-state ceremonials. In both cases, Catholic forms were subordinated to the Nation as the supreme deity.

It is difficult to evaluate the impact *primorriverista* reforms had on those young men joining the military service. The record suggests that more Spaniards participated in military service than ever before, the number of reservist officers was unparalleled, political indoctrination and propaganda in the barracks reached unprecedented levels and new patriotic rituals were invented. However, it is possible to detect certain factors which critically hampered the process of nationalisation. As noted above, the preservation of monetary redemptions hindered interclass integration into the national ideal and the reduction of military service to two years allowed less time for indoctrination. Contemporary accounts of garrison life portrayed a gloomy

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<sup>99</sup> Rubio, *Crónica* [1986], 141.

situation. Most of the companies lacked the number of troops required, the vast majority of the recruits graduated without having proper military instruction, and many soldiers worked as officers' personal assistants.<sup>100</sup> According Major García Benítez, indifference and corruption pervaded life in the garrisons and soldiers soon understood that the best thing to do was not to get involved, not to enquire about anything, and to automatically obey the orders given by officers.<sup>101</sup> The effect of this way of life was not the creation of a 'New Spaniard' but of apathetic soldiers whose only aim was to survive in the barracks for eight months waiting for permission to return home.

The transformation of the military educational system was far from being completed. For all its legislation and propaganda, the regime was powerless to sufficiently increase the number of political and physical education instructors. Once again, the reason is partially to be found in a lack of funds. As General Mola observed, economic restrictions and the African campaign precluded the materialisation of Primo's military reforms.<sup>102</sup> From 1925 on, the military budget was gradually reduced both in terms of total money received by the army and in relation to the percentage taken out of the national budget.<sup>103</sup> In addition, the growth in the numbers of recruits (more than 10% throughout the dictatorship) further pressurised the military educational system.<sup>104</sup> Ironically, Primo was somehow a victim of his own success in incorporating more recruits into the army. With a military budget constantly decreasing and the number of recruits steadily increasing, the intended conversion of the army into an indoctrinating machine proved impossible.

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<sup>99</sup> RCO 2-6-1925, *CLE*, 1925, n. 145, 201-202.

<sup>100</sup> Infantry Major Ladislao Cuadrado, "Algunas transformaciones y síntesis de un plan de instrucción", *Memorial de Infantería*, September 1930, vol. 38, n. 224, 201-208.

<sup>101</sup> Navajas, *Ejército*, 161-162.

<sup>102</sup> Mola, *Obras completas*, 1029.

<sup>103</sup> The annual distribution of the military budget in millions of pesetas was as follows: 1924 (second semester)/1925 (first semester): 1,343.1; 1925/1926: 1,185.5; 1926 (second semester): 497.9; 1927: 948.2; 1928: 932.4; 1929: 925.9; 1930: 1,036.7. The percentage of the military expenditure out of the total national budget was as follows: 1924/1925: 36.4%; 1925/1926: 32.2%; 1926 (second semester): 30.2%; 1927: 26.0%; 1928: 26.6%; 1929: 25.0%; 1930: 26.33%. Data in Navajas, *Ejército*, 189. Nevertheless, by the end of the dictatorship the regime increased the educational item in the military budget. The money allocated to military instruction centres grew a 7.44% in the last two years of the dictatorship. It went from 9,266,018.10 pesetas in 1929 to 9,912,682.10 pesetas in 1930. With Berenguer in government, the educational item for 1931 went up to 10,714, 304.75 pesetas. RD 3-1-1929, *CLE*, 1929, 22; RD 3-1-1930, *CLE*, 1930, 22; RD 3-1-1931, *CLE*, 1931, 14.

<sup>104</sup> The number of recruits went from 134,410 in 1923 to 148,522 in 1930, a 10.49% increase. The number of recruits throughout the dictatorship was as follows: 1923: 134,410 recruits; 1924: 142,901; 1925: 140,275; 1926: 150,116; 1927: 153,885; 1928: 139,139; 1929: 144,615; 1930: 148,522. Data in *Anuario Estadístico de España 1931*.

## THE ARMY AS EDUCATOR OF CIVILIANS

The most ambitious plans for army-led mass indoctrination took place outside the military garrisons. As explained above, during the years prior to the dictatorship the majority of military officers had come to the conclusion that the army was the only institution capable of regenerating a decadent Spanish society. For the most radical military nationalists, fulfilling this self-imposed task meant that the army had to leave the barracks and indoctrinate civilians in patriotic values in their own towns and villages. Once in power, Primo de Rivera attempted to carry out these plans of total mass indoctrination and sent hundreds of officers out of the barracks as “apostles of the fatherland”.

In the *primorriverista* bid for civilian mass indoctrination, it is possible to differentiate between two institutions created by the regime. The main role was played by the *delegados gubernativos*, an army of officers distributed throughout the entire country with the specific aim of organising patriotic conferences, mass rallies and military parades in support of the regime. The delegates operated throughout the whole of the dictatorship and their activities aimed to indoctrinate all sectors of society, without the distinctions of gender, class, or age. Conversely, the *Servicio Nacional de Educación Física, Ciudadana y Premilitar* (SNEFCP), focused on children and youngsters and it only operated during the last years of the dictatorship. Seeking to morally and physically improve the ‘race’, the SNEFCP instructed an elite group of officers, whose duties included teaching gymnastics, pre-military education and patriotic doctrines to the ‘New Spaniards’.

### The apostles of the fatherland

In October 1923, the Military Directory established the post of the *delegados gubernativos* to assist the new civil governors – the latter military officers themselves. Directly controlled by the Minister of the Interior, Martínez Anido assigned *delegados* to all judicial districts (*cabezas de partido*) in the country to “inspect and orient” municipal life. Their initial task was to gain total military control of provincial life and destroy the *caciquil* local network. In this manner, the dictatorship hoped the *delegados* would create a “new citizenry” in towns and villages.<sup>105</sup> Primo was fully aware of the fact that the destruction of the old political structures had to be

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<sup>105</sup> RD 20-10-1923, *La Gaceta* 21-10-1923.

complemented with the emergence of a new type of citizen at the municipal level. The delegates were ordered to organise the local *Somatén*, boy-scouts, gymnastic associations and cultural societies for men and women in order to diminish illiteracy rates. They were also responsible for organising patriotic conferences, which should promote the virtues of the “Spanish race” and emphasise the duty to defend the fatherland, respect authority and the head of the state, protect the environment, and pay taxes.<sup>106</sup> For this educational undertaking of “strengthening the citizen’s soul and body”, delegates were advised to enlist the participation of local teachers, priests and doctors.<sup>107</sup>

The *delegados* were only responsible to the civil governors, who in turn were directly controlled by the Minister of the Interior. In this hierarchical structure, all orders came from Primo and Martínez Anido. They were wholly sensitive to the importance the delegates would have for the future of the regime. Primo and Martínez Anido’s initial instructions made clear that the military dictatorship depended upon the delegates’ success.<sup>108</sup> Fearing the delegates could be corrupted by the *caciques*, Primo insisted they should not accept presents or invitations to lunch from anyone in towns and villages under their jurisdiction. Following his populist drive, the dictator ordered the delegates to help “the poor and the middle-classes”, and keep the price of basic products low.<sup>109</sup> The actions of the *delegados* governing, controlling, ‘educating’, and censoring municipal life would be the yardstick by which civilians would measure the Military Directory.

The regime found no problems in gathering volunteers for the job. Most of the *delegados* were previously in the military reserves, earning 75% of an active officer’s salary, and becoming an “apostle of the fatherland” meant getting full pay. By early December 1923, 523 governmental delegates were already in post all around Spain. Out of the 523 delegates, 434 were commissioned to serve at judicial districts and 89

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<sup>106</sup> Instructions to the *delegados* in RD 20-10-1923, RO 9-12-1923, RD 20-3-1924. See also Primo’s letters to the *delegados* 5- 4-1924; 24-4-1924; Martínez Anido’s letter to the *delegados*, 1-1-1924; Martínez Anido’s telegram to the *delegados*, 4-1-1924 in AHN, Presidencia del Gobierno, Bundle 331, Box 1.

<sup>107</sup> Art. 4, RD 20-10-1923.

<sup>108</sup> See Martínez Anido’s circular letter to all civil governors, 7-12-1923, “Prevenciones que para el mejor desempeño de sus cargos deben tener presentes los Delegados Gubernativos”, AGA, Interior, Box 149.

<sup>109</sup> Primo de Rivera, “Instrucciones a los Delegados Gubernativos”, 10-12-1923, AGA, Interior, Box 149.

at provincial capitals.<sup>110</sup> Popular response to the arrival of the delegates appears to have been sceptical. According to the memoirs of a former delegate, at first most of the locals in towns and villages were profoundly mistrustful of the officers, whom they saw as new *caciques* in uniform.<sup>111</sup> Despite the cold reception, during the first months the delegates showed a strong zeal in their cleansing of public administration. Fuelled by an avalanche of anonymous denunciations made by the public, they arrested and jailed dozens of municipal councillors and *caciques*.<sup>112</sup> Soon the situation became chaotic. On 1 January 1924, Martínez Anido sent “confidential instructions” to the military governors and the *delegados* as new guidelines to inspect the municipalities. The Minister of the Interior requested caution when pursuing *caciques*, since an eventual judicial liberation of the alleged criminals would weaken the delegates’ public image.<sup>113</sup> The petition was ignored and four weeks later Martínez Anido insisted in moderating the number of arrests, deportations, and fines imposed by the *delegados*. Once again, the minister argued that massive confinements were worsening public support for the delegates and maintained anonymous denunciations should lead to investigations and not to immediate detentions.<sup>114</sup> In the following months, Martínez Anido often insisted in minimizing captures in different letters sent to the *delegados*, clearly showing that ministerial guidelines regarding detentions were not been followed.<sup>115</sup>

The actions of the delegates were devastating for the old political elite. After the dissolution of municipalities, the delegates became the new local lords. They formed the new provisional town councils, imprisoned political opponents and controlled information published in local newspapers. The implementation of the new

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<sup>110</sup> The names, corps, and destinations of all *delegados* appointed in December 1923 in AGA, Interior, Box 149, File 15.

<sup>111</sup> E.T.L. (pseudonym of Enrique Tomás y Luque), *Por pueblos y aldeas. De las memorias de un Delegado Gubernativo* [Toledo: 1928], 52-53.

<sup>112</sup> Dozens of these denunciations are found in AHN, Gobernación, Serie A, Bundle 18 A, Files 1 and 2.

<sup>113</sup> Martínez Anido to civil governors, “Instrucciones reservadas que los Sres. Gobernadores civiles y Delegados gubernativos deberán tener presentes en sus misiones inspectoras de los Ayuntamientos”, 1-1-1924, AGA, Interior, Box 149.

<sup>114</sup> ROC 27-1-1924, *Gaceta* 29-1-1924.

<sup>115</sup> For the letters sent to the *delegados* and the civil governors demanding moderation in the number of arrests see Martínez Anido to civil governors, 2-2-1924; Martínez Anido to civil governors, circular telegram 5-2-1924; Martínez Anido to civil governors, circular telegram, 20-8-1924, AHN, Gobernación, Serie A, Bundle 17 A, Box 2. For the issue of provincial deportations and the civil governors’ authority over the *delegados* see Civil Governor of Granada to Martínez Anido, 22-8-1924; further petitions of moderation in Martínez Anido to all delegates, 8-3-1925, AGA, Interior, Box 149; Martínez Anido to Civil Governors, 29-1-1926, AHN, Gobernación, Serie A, Bundle 17 A, Box 2.

municipal statute in 1924 did not change the delegates' position. On 8 March 1924, Calvo Sotelo wrote to the civil governors explaining how the statute had to be implemented. Legally, civil governors were responsible for the election of those corporative representatives "on interim bases".<sup>116</sup> However, they also chose those councilmen who were to be popularly elected, since municipal elections were cancelled *sine die*. In practice, this meant that governors controlled urban municipalities and delegates rural town councils. For all the legislation ordering the delegates to respect "municipal autonomy", military officers seem to have reinforced their local power after the enactment of the statute.<sup>117</sup> Four months after the implementation of the law, Martínez Anido complained to the governors about the delegates abusing their authority. As described by the Minister of the Interior, the delegates were involved in all details of municipal life, such as the designation of all public officers, including minor posts.<sup>118</sup> In October that year, Calvo wrote to Primo demanding the gradual elimination of the delegates. In his view, the delegates had already fulfilled their initial mission and were by then causing "a huge moral damage to the regime".<sup>119</sup> The idea of municipal autonomy, so highly publicised by the regime, turned out to be incompatible with the actions of the delegates.

Reducing indiscriminate imprisonments and respecting municipal autonomy were questions of public image. Secretly using the delegates to spy on political opponents and purging suspicious liberals from the state apparatus were a very different issue. In early January 1924, the Minister of Interior ordered the delegates to send him "confidential reports" on those judges "who weakly support governmental actions". In this manner liberal judges would not obstruct the regime's eradication of *caciques*.<sup>120</sup> Invigorated by Martínez Anido's orders not to tolerate "whether in the press or in conversations anything that could damage the Directory's prestige", political repression touched all those opposing the regime.<sup>121</sup> Republicans, Liberals, Communists, Anarchists, Conservatives and Carlists were imprisoned and exiled for

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<sup>116</sup> Calvo Sotelo to civil governors, 28-3-1924, AGA, Interior, Box 149.

<sup>117</sup> The RD 29-3-1924, *Gaceta*, 30-3-1924, reiterated the presence of delegates in town councils until elections were called.

<sup>118</sup> Martínez Anido to civil governors, 11-7-1924, AHN, Gobernación, Serie A, Bundle 17 A, Box 2.

<sup>119</sup> Calvo Sotelo, *Mis servicios*, 26.

<sup>120</sup> Martínez Anido to civil governors, 5-1-1924, AHN, Gobernación, Serie A, Bundle 17 A, Box 2.

<sup>121</sup> Martínez Anido to civil governors, 10-10-1923; and Martínez Anido to civil governors, 27-10-1923, AHN, Gobernación, Serie A, Bundle 18A, Files 1 and 2.



propagating “anti-Spanish” ideas.<sup>122</sup> Civil governors soon understood the huge potential delegates had for crushing provincial political opposition. At the local level, delegates selected those civilians that were willing to collaborate with the dictatorship. The role of these civilians was essentially to gather information and anti-*primorriverista* propaganda and pass it to delegates, who in turn filtered the information to the governors.<sup>123</sup> At the top of the pyramid, Martínez Anido controlled the whole network. For example, Fernando Garrido y Garrido, secretary of the San Fernando Casino, handed private correspondence between the leader of the Republican Radical Party, Alejandro Lerroux, and the republican novelist and politician, Vicente Blasco Ibáñez, to the provincial military authorities. The letters analysed the Spanish political situation after 13 September 1923 and described Lerroux’ intention of ousting the dictatorship with a republican military coup. Just one month after the letters were written, the Minister of the Interior and Primo had a copy in their offices.<sup>124</sup>

Martínez Anido also fostered inter-provincial communication among civil governors. Different investigations on anti-*primorriverista* military officers, Anarchists and Republicans were coordinated from Madrid with the intervention of diverse provincial governors, showing high efficiency in political repression.<sup>125</sup> Moreover, the Minister of the Interior reinforced Spanish police cooperation with France, the USA and the UK and extended the espionage network abroad. As Spain entered the “Anti-Bolshevik International”, the official justification for international cooperation was fighting Communism. In fact, much of the information passed to the Ministry of the Interior from abroad regarded suspected Communist activities.<sup>126</sup> However, the ultimate goal of this collaboration went beyond the struggle against Communism and implicated all political opposition, as proved by the detention of Ramón Álvarez. A Uruguayan journalist, Álvarez had interviewed Unamuno during his exile in Paris. French police informed Martínez Anido about the meeting. When

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<sup>122</sup> Some examples of repression of leftists, liberals and conservatives in AHN, Gobernación, Serie A, Bundle 18A, Folders 1, 2 and 5. For the repression of Carlists and Jaimistas see Gobernación, Bundle 40 A.

<sup>123</sup> Some reports sent by delegates informing on collaborators and political enemies are found in AHN, Presidencia, Bundle 331, Box 1.

<sup>124</sup> The letters in AHN, Gobernación, Serie A, Bundle 18A, Folder 1.

<sup>125</sup> Some examples of inter-provincial coordination for political repression in AHN Gobernación, Serie A, Bundle 18A, Folders 1 and 2.

the reporter tried to cross the border together with the Uruguayan national football team, he was arrested and his “interview with Unamuno and some other documents offensive to the Spanish Patria and the Military Directory” were confiscated.<sup>127</sup> The regime’s inquisitorial network was designed to silence all sorts of opposition.

The destruction of local *caciques* and political repression went hand in hand with the ‘educational mission’ of the delegates. Despite the reduction in the number of delegates and the different duties they were assigned throughout the dictatorship, the regime always insisted on the task of mass indoctrination as an essential obligation.<sup>128</sup> It was precisely after the first reduction in the number of delegates in early 1925 when the regime emphasised the need to strengthen patriotic education. As Martínez Anido explained to the delegates, nationalist teaching was an “investment” in eventual patriots:

“The Delegates will find a wide field for their activities in cultivating the moral energies and civic virtues of our youth. The Fiesta of the Tree, the Boy Scouts, school friendly societies, the Fiesta of the Flag, etc, etc: these are some examples of patriotic goals which are completely under the delegates’ jurisdiction. The educational action [...] exercised over the current generation of children will eventually flourish with positive impetus. For this reason, although at first sight the action seems sterile, the delegates must work on it carefully, since it always gives a mellow fruit”.<sup>129</sup>

The regime used the same technique for nationalising civilians that it was using for indoctrinating soldiers. A combination of theory, put forth in patriotic conferences, and practice, through national rituals and gymnastics, was implemented

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<sup>126</sup> Some correspondence between Martínez Anido and the British and United States of America Embassies in Madrid in AHN Gobernación, Serie A, Bundle 18A. For tens of cases against suspected working class militants see AHN Gobernación, Serie A, Bundle 17A, Bundle 42 and Bundle 59, Box 2.

<sup>127</sup> Minister of Interior to Gerona frontier post, 28-3-1925; Civil Governor of Gerona to Minister of Interior, 8-4-1925; Internal report of the Ministry of Interior, 14-4-1925, AHN, Gobernación, Serie A, Bundle 18A, Folder 6.

<sup>128</sup> The institution of the *delegados* was transformed throughout the dictatorship both in terms of numbers and duties. After one year of work purging municipalities, Primo decided it was the right moment for reducing the number of delegates. The dictator argued the good functioning of the new town councils and economic considerations led him to consider the reduction. In early 1925, the number of delegates was reduced to 224. They were ordered to concentrate on their “educational mission” and gathering popular support for the UP. The following year the number of delegates was reduced to 132. The officers were ordered to move to the provincial capital under the direct supervision of the civil governors. The final reduction of 1927 set the number of delegates at 79. This number was to remain static until the end of the dictatorship.

<sup>129</sup> Martínez Anido to delegates, 8-3-1925, AGA, Interior, Box 149.

in the same manner that military instructors 'educated' recruits. However, indoctrinating entire towns and villages required many more personnel. Since the very beginning, the Ministry of the Interior asked public school teachers, priests, and civilians not linked to the old regime to cooperate in the educational campaigns directed by the delegates. The record suggests teachers in public schools (*maestros nacionales*) actively cooperated with the military officers. Tens of the delegates' reports sent to Martínez Anido confirmed teachers' involvement in the task of "national regeneration", giving patriotic lectures, during the first months of the regime.<sup>130</sup> The delegates were aware of the importance teachers' cooperation had for patriotic propaganda. One of the first things the military officers did when taking charge of their posts as delegates was to gather together all the *maestros* in the judicial district. The delegates demanded support for the regime and active cooperation from the local teachers' associations and the meeting concluded with a public declaration of allegiance to the dictatorship.<sup>131</sup> The system was effective. During the first months of 1924 dozens of "patriotic conferences" to indoctrinate adults and children took place throughout Spain. More often than not, the delegate's speeches were complemented by the participation of teachers.<sup>132</sup>

Teachers were also involved in the celebration of public ceremonies. In this the delegates progressed apace. Following Martínez Anido's orders, the military officers took every single chance to mobilise the population. They organised the celebration of the Day of the Race and the Fiesta of the Sanctification of the *Somatén* Flag in towns and villages where these ceremonies had never taken place before. As described in Chapter 2, the Feast of the Sanctification of the *Somatén* Flag, regime's anniversaries and military victories in Africa were also popularly celebrated under the administration of civil governors and delegates. Even ostensibly non-nationalist

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<sup>130</sup> The reports from the delegates and the provincial civil governors in AHN, Presidencia, Bundle 331, Box 1. See also the creation of a *Junta de Cultura Física* by the local delegate in Aoiz. Jesús María Fuentes Lanas, *La Dictadura de Primo de Rivera en Navarra* [Pamplona: 1998], 105. More cases of priests, teachers and doctors co-operation with the delegates in La Rioja in Carlos Navajas, *Los cados y las comadreja. La Dictadura de Primo de Rivera en la Rioja* [Logroño: 1994], 77-87.

<sup>131</sup> See, for example, reports from the delegates of Carabanchel Bajo, Llano de Vich, Santa Coloma de Farnés, Mondoñedo, Palos de Moguer, Barco de Valdeorras, Pola de Siero, Vich, Talavera, Llodio, Caldas Reyes, Olot, Salas de los Infantes, Alcira, Quintanar de la Orden, Puenteareas, Linares, Cistierna, and Belorado. AHN, Presidencia, Bundle 331, Boxes 1 and 2. Some other delegates addressed the teachers in the local press asking for inculcating love for the fatherland in children's hearts. This was the case of the delegate José Fernández Navarro in *El Magisterio Castellano*, 1-3-1924.

ceremonies such as the Fiesta of the Tree and the Saving Feast gained a patriotic connotation and went through a revival under military direction. In these fiestas the delegates gathered the local authorities for the occasion, hoisted the Spanish flag and delivered patriotic speeches. In many of these ceremonies, a public mass was given. In some other cases local priests collaborated by giving homilies as a part of the ritual.<sup>133</sup> As in the nationalist ceremonies with soldiers, Catholic imaginary and rhetoric were integrated into civic patriotic rituals. As in the case of the recruits, this integration was in terms of subordination to the nation considered the supreme deity.

The physical improvement of the Spanish 'race' was also one of the delegates' duties. Martínez Anido's initial orders emphasised the importance of inculcating hygienic customs into the daily lives of the masses with regard particularly to food, drink and household sanitation and sanitary inspections were soon carried out by the delegates.<sup>134</sup> The mandate additionally included the promotion of physical education for both adults and children. The Royal Order of 7 April 1924 announced the creation of a gymnastic record book, which the delegates should deliver to locals to keep a record of their physical exercises. However, the evidence suggests the delegates failed to promote gymnastics during the Military Directory. Two months after the Royal Order, some of the delegates complained to the Ministry of the Interior because they had yet to receive the gymnastic diary.<sup>135</sup> Very few delegates mention in their reports any sort of gymnastic activities organised in their district whatsoever. With the exception of a few delegates, who instructed civilians with the military gymnastic book in municipal fields, most of the 'apostles of the fatherland' were far from prioritising physical education among their activities.<sup>136</sup>

The formation of the Civil Directory brought the intensification of the indoctrination of the masses. The Royal Decree of 29 January 1926 officially sanctioned a new campaign aiming to "plant moral and patriotic ideas in the humble

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<sup>132</sup> See reports from the delegates of Valencia de Alcántara, Hellín, Andújar, Icod, Palos de Moguer, Llodio, Olot, Sala de los Infantes, Alcira, Cariñena, Calatayud, Madrigueras, and Iniesta. See also civil governor of Cuenca to Presidencia del Gobierno, AHN, Presidencia, Bundle 331, Box 1.

<sup>133</sup> Tens of reports on diverse patriotic celebrations in AHN, Presidencia, Bundle 331, Box 1.

<sup>134</sup> Martínez Anido to civil governors, 7-12-1923; "Misión de los Delegados Gubernativos acerca de los Ayuntamientos en virtud del Estatuto Municipal vigente", "Instrucciones sanitarias para los Señores Delegados Gubernativos", 4-1-1924, by Martínez Anido. AGA, Interior, Box 149. See also RO 29-3-1924, *Gaceta*, 30-3-1924.

<sup>135</sup> See for example delegate of Toro to Presidencia del Gobierno, 31-5-1924. AHN, Presidencia, Bundle 331, Box 1.

minds” of the lower rural classes. It established “the celebration of Sunday conferences for adults of both sexes in every town with less than 6,000 inhabitants in the kingdom”. The conferences should deal with the fulfilment of citizen’s duties, Spanish and local history, and professional topics, such as agriculture or small industries. The events were to be organised by the mayor and would take place in the town hall. The legislation recommended mayors select the lecturers from amongst teachers, doctors, pharmacists, military officers and priests.<sup>137</sup> Paralleling soldiers’ education, the regime prioritised indoctrination of rural masses, a vast social group considered not yet “intoxicated” by leftist ideas.

The selection of mayors as organisers of patriotic conferences enlarged the scope of those involved in mass nationalisation. Nonetheless, the campaign did not signal a lesser involvement of the delegates and the civil governors in rural indoctrination. Delegates, who were ordered to move to the provincial capitals under direct supervision of the civil governors,<sup>138</sup> continued to organise conferences and ceremonies in towns and villages from 1926 on presidential instructions. Less than a month after the legislation on rural conferences for adults came out, the chief of the Bureau of the President, Antonio Almagro Méndez, wrote to Martínez Anido enquiring about the conferences. In his letter, Lieutenant Colonel Almagro reminded the Minister of the Interior that Primo had a special interest in the celebration of the conferences and urged Martínez Anido to encourage mayors, via governmental delegates and civil governors, to fulfil their duties.<sup>139</sup> Obediently, the Minister of the Interior sent a telegram to all civil governors the next day. He ordered them to press mayors to celebrate the conferences and demanded reports on the events.<sup>140</sup> Moreover, Martínez Anido sent 200 copies of Primo’s *Disertación ciudadana* to every single province the following week. The aim was clear: the dictator’s work had to “reach all towns and be the base of Sunday conferences.”<sup>141</sup>

Sunday conferences in small towns were conceived as a second mass. The entire adult population would gather to hear the missionaries of the fatherland,

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<sup>136</sup> Among those few who reported the organisation of physical exercises to Madrid in the spring of 1924 were the delegates of Cazalla de la Sierra, Andújar, and Alpera. AHN, Presidencia, Bundle 331, Box 1.

<sup>137</sup> RO 29-1-1926, *DOMG*, 31-1-1926, n. 24, 249.

<sup>138</sup> RD 20-3-1926, *DOMG*, 23-3-1926, n. 65, 74-75.

<sup>139</sup> Jefe de la Secretaría Auxiliar de Presidencia del Consejo de Ministros to Martínez Anido, 23-2-1926, AHN, Gobernación, Serie A, Bundle 61A, Box 3.

<sup>140</sup> Martínez Anido to civil governors, 24-2-1926, AHN, Gobernación, Serie A, Bundle 61A, Box 3.

<sup>141</sup> Martínez Anido to civil governors, 6-3-1926, AHN, Gobernación, Serie A, Bundle 61A, Box 3.

preaching the dictator's gospel. The homogenisation of doctrine that the Royal Order of 29 January 1926 demanded for these conferences should be based on the national leader's thought. This model anticipated a form of mobilisation and propaganda later used in Fascist Italy during the 1930s. In 1932 Mussolini created the "Sunday meetings", at which party speakers propagated Fascist doctrine. The idea behind this model was very similar to the *primorriverista*. The propagandists gathered the entire adult population in every commune and preached nationalist dogma.<sup>142</sup> As in the Spanish case, governmental representatives focused their weekly activities on small towns and villages. Unlike Spain, however, in Italy all those exercising the patriotic apostolate belonged to the official party.

Yet this sort of mass indoctrination proved difficult to realise. In the province of Álava, for example, the civil governor found serious problems in organising the meetings, since most of the villages had a very small population of farmers and "lacked suitable people for cultural tasks whatsoever". As a result, he had to recruit personnel, namely teachers, from outside the villages, and this delayed the organisation of the events.<sup>143</sup> In Barcelona, Primo's plans for organising patriotic conferences in small towns overlapped with a very similar campaign promoted by the provincial government. In the spring of 1926, the *Diputació Provincial de Barcelona*, subsidised a series of patriotic and professional conferences held in the Popular Libraries of small towns. The delegates of Arenys de Mar and Manresa were actively involved organising the events.<sup>144</sup> When the courses ended, the delegates organised some more patriotic conferences during the summer.<sup>145</sup> Even in those provinces where the governor acted efficiently, like Santander, only 50% of the municipalities had celebrated the conferences by early March 1926. The civil governor of the province optimistically reckoned that all municipalities would have had their first meeting by April.<sup>146</sup> Whether it was due to lack of coordination, human and economic resources, or mayoral political will, Sunday conferences seem to have had an irregular implementation. The Royal Decree of 28 December 1927 insisted on the necessity of

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<sup>142</sup> For the Sunday meetings in Italy see Gentile, *The Sacralization*, 97.

<sup>143</sup> Civil Governor of Álava to Martínez Anido, 26-2-1926, AHN, Gobernación, Serie A, Bundle 61A, Box 3.

<sup>144</sup> The courses were celebrated in Pineda, Canet del Mar, and Sallent between March and June 1926. ADPB, Departament de Instrucció Pública, Bundle 4177, File 15.

<sup>145</sup> See, for example, the celebration of Sunday conferences in Botrils, *La Vanguardia*, 27-8-1926.

<sup>146</sup> Civil Governor of Santander to Martínez Anido, 8-3-1926, AHN, Gobernación, Serie A, Bundle 61A, Box 3.

stimulating the celebration of Sunday conferences in towns with less than 6,000 inhabitants.<sup>147</sup> Two years after the creation of Sunday lectures, the regime deemed the number of events clearly insufficient.

The work of the delegates as propagandists was hampered by a series of factors throughout the dictatorship. First of all, the actions of the delegates seriously contributed to the destruction of the *caciquil* network in the countryside. After the dictatorship, the liberal and conservative dynastic parties were incapable of reproducing their old political structures at the local level.<sup>148</sup> Still, during the dictatorship some *caciques* remained active in the shadows opposing and obstructing the work of the delegates. In April 1926, Martínez Anido announced that “old politicians”, posing as regime’s supporters, were trying to influence the civil governors’ decisions in several provinces. He warned civil governors against following any sort of “recommendations” from anyone (with the exception of the UP), in order to avoid Restoration-style political practices. According to the reports civil governors sent to Madrid in late 1927, the “virus of the old politicians” continued to menace the regime in Orense, Vizcaya, Málaga, Teruel, Valencia, and Granada; and as late as December 1929, the civil governments of La Rioja and Navarre informed Primo that the removal of the delegates would lead to the immediate re-emergence of *caciquismo* in their provinces.<sup>149</sup>

Another real danger of the actions of the delegates was that the “apostles of the fatherland” would turn into *caciques* themselves. Placed in the position of local lords, the delegates could not always resist the temptation of using their power for their own benefit. For all the warnings Martínez Anido’s gave about the necessity of demonstrating unquestionable moral behaviour, accusations of corruption soon appeared. On some occasions delegates were corrupted by the old political elites, who bribed the officer in order to keep control of municipal governments. This was the case, among others, of José del Olmo Medina, a delegate in the province of Valencia, who was allegedly paid 5000 pesetas to dismantle the town council of Guadasuar in March 1928 and set up a new one in April that year with different councillors. In some other cases the delegates simply abused their positions for material gain. For

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<sup>147</sup> Art. 6. RO, 27-12-1927, *Gaceta* 28-12-1927.

<sup>148</sup> Ben-Ami, “The Crisis of the Dynastic Élite”, 71-90.

<sup>149</sup> One should bear in mind, however, that these reports were written to demand the permanence of the delegates, so the governors might well have exaggerated the importance of *caciquismo* in order to give

example, Alberto Serrano Montaner, delegate of the province of Granada, accepted to be accommodated in a mansion offered by the town council, and was accused of buying jewellery and tickets to bullfights with public money. Moreover, Serrano allegedly abused his position by doing business with the municipality of Motril and pressed the town council to recommend him to the government as a member of the National Assembly. Although an enquiry by the Ministry of War concluded that none of these accusations could be proved, Martínez Anido discharged him immediately. This was the general line followed by the Ministry of the Interior: delegates accused of corruption were dismissed without delay, even in those cases when investigators had not found them guilty.<sup>150</sup>

Martínez Anido followed a very similar policy in those districts where the military officers had family and friends, and the possibilities of *caciquismo* and political influence grew. In Lérida, for example, delegate José Valladaura Maya, was fired for having connections with the old political elites. Not willing to run any sort of risk, Martínez Anido decided not to keep any delegate who had influential relatives in the districts under his jurisdiction. This was the case of Fernando Suárez de Figueroa, delegate of Tortosa, who, despite having “good conditions for the post” according to the civil governor of Gerona, was not re-appointed in 1926 because his father was the director of the Bank of Spain in Tortosa and his father-in-law was a businessman connected to liberal elites. The same applied to those blamed of “immoral behaviour”, like Humberto Gil Cabrera, delegate in Lérida, anonymously accused of having a debased life and equally dismissed.<sup>151</sup> Obviously, Martínez Anido was aware of the

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Primo the impression of being in a difficult political situation in their provinces. 1927 and 1929 reports in AHN, Presidencia del Gobierno, Bundle 332.

<sup>150</sup> This was also the case of Francisco Alonso Burillo, delegate in Zaragoza, accused of creating a business of coal trade and defrauding his partner. Although the military investigation could not prove him guilty, Martínez Anido discharged him immediately. The cases of Alonso, Serrano and del Olmo in AHN, Presidencia del Gobierno, Bundle 332. There were, however, some exceptions to this policy. Two delegates in the province of Seville, Juan Rodríguez Gutiérrez and Juan Borges Fe, got commissions out of selling industrial machinery but they remained in their posts even when the civil governor advised Martínez Anido otherwise. Julio Ponce Alberca, “Ejército, política y administración durante la Dictadura de Primo de Rivera: los delegados gubernativos en la provincia de Sevilla”, in *Fuentes para la Historia militar en los archivos españoles* [Madrid: 2000], 753-754.

<sup>151</sup> Another case questioning a delegates morality is to be found in Gerona where Ricardo Motta Miegimolle was considered to be politically influenced by friends. Reports of Civil Governors on the delegates in Servicio Histórico Militar (hereafter SHM), Colección Adicional de Documentos, Asuntos Generales, Bundle 11, Reel 7. At times the accusations of *caciquil* influence on delegates came from local leaders of the UP and *somatenistas*. See the accusations of the leader of the UP in Puebla de Cazalla, the Somatén and UP leaders of Coronil and the mayor of Pruna against Francisco Vázquez Maquieira, delegate of Morón. Various letters to Primo dated 11-11-1924 in AHN, Presidencia del



damage these accusations had in the eyes of the public and got rid of any questionable delegate. But for all the zeal the Minister of Interior took in dismissing delegates, the proliferation of corruption and charges of immorality seriously damaged the public image of the “apostles of the fatherland”.

The fact that the town councils had to pay the delegates’ salaries and costs also play a part in alienating the population from the military officers. In December 1923, the regime established that all municipalities in the judicial districts had to contribute *pro rata* to the delegates’ wages. In addition, the town councils were forced to pay the delegates’ travel expenses, plus 100 pesetas for stationary supplies. The head of the judicial districts also had to provide the military officers with housing, an office and an administrative assistant.<sup>152</sup> This was an important burden for the municipal treasuries and soon problems with the payments arose. In June 1924, Martínez Anido urged the town councils to accelerate these payments. After seven months of the creation of the delegates, some municipalities had not paid a single peseta to the officers.<sup>153</sup> The problem spread to the army, since the military garrisons advanced the money to the delegates before collecting it from the municipalities. In June 1926, the Minister of War wrote to the Minister of the Interior complaining about the “important and long-lasting debts” the municipalities had with the army. He claimed that several municipalities were ignoring the payments, despite the military’s continuous demands and the civil governors mediation, which had “disturbed accountability in almost every regiment”. The Minister of War attached a report from the Military Governor of the 8<sup>th</sup> Military Region, which illustrated the magnitude of the trouble. In the second semester of 1925 and only referring to advance payments, the municipalities of Galicia and León had accumulated a debt of 20,343.45 pesetas with the delegates.<sup>154</sup>

Support for the delegates within and outside the army gradually diminished. Initially conceived as a tool to fight *caciquismo*, by the end of the dictatorship the

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Gobierno, Bundle 442. See also the *somatenistas* of Cazalla de la Sierra against the delegate Tomás Álvarez in AGA, Presidencia del Gobierno, Bundle 252, Box 6.

<sup>152</sup> The municipalities had to pay the difference between the officers’ salaries in a situation of ‘available’ (before becoming delegates) and ‘active’ (once they have been commissioned), which amounted to 25% of the total wages. RO 9-12-1923, *Gaceta* 10-9-1923; Martínez Anido to civil governors, 9-12-1923, AHN, Gobernación, Serie A, Bundle 17A, Box 2; RCO 10-12-1923, *Gaceta* 11-12-1923.

<sup>153</sup> Minister of Interior to civil governors, 17-6-1924, AHN, Gobernación, Serie A, Bundle 17A, Box 2, File 20.

governmental delegates had become an uncomfortable agency linked to political and economic scandals and a burden for the municipalities and the army itself. Nevertheless, Primo decided to maintain the institution until the end of his regime, intensifying the delegates' activities on helping the UP.<sup>155</sup> Berenguer perfectly understood how related the figure of the delegates was to the *primorriverista* regime in the public's mind. Attempting to dissociate himself from the former dictator, Berenguer abolished the institution three weeks after Primo's dismissal.<sup>156</sup>

How successful might the institution of the governmental delegates be viewed as an agency of indoctrination? There can be no doubt that the delegates were fairly effective in destroying the *caciquil* power base at the local level. The liberal and conservative press welcomed the creation of the delegates and a segment of the public participated in this purging of municipal life, with denunciations of the old politicians. However, when it came to promoting nationalist sentiments, the results were much more dubious. During the Military Directory, the priority given to repressive measures made the propagandist task irregular and lacking in coordination, although the delegates managed to mobilise large sectors of both rural and urban population in nationalist festivities and pro-regime ceremonies. When in 1926 the Sunday patriotic conferences were institutionalised, the reduction in the number of delegates, structural problems, and the lack of cooperation on the part of the mayors seriously hampered the celebrations of these patriotic ceremonies. This should not come as a surprise. When the Italian Fascists institutionalised 'Sunday meetings' in the 1930s, they also failed to make an impact on the masses.<sup>157</sup> In Spain, the initial popular scepticism towards the delegates turned into disapproval before long.<sup>158</sup> Indiscriminate political repression, corruption and diverse cases of power abuse proved those who initially saw the delegates as 'new *caciques* in uniform' to be correct. The fact that after the fall of the dictatorship a village welcomed republican campaigners with the banner "Long live to the men who bring us the rule of law" is telling.<sup>159</sup> The *primorriverista*

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<sup>154</sup> The letter of the Minister of War to the Minister of the Interior, 12-6-1926, and the report in SHM, Colección Adicional de Documentos, Bundle 11, Reel 7.

<sup>155</sup> For the connections between the delegates and the regime's political party see chapter 6.

<sup>156</sup> RD 21-2-1930, *Gaceta*, 22-1-1930.

<sup>157</sup> Gentile, *Sacralization*, 97, 186-187.

<sup>158</sup> Emílio Porta, *La Dictadura en las aldeas* [Valencia: n. d.], 213-215.

<sup>159</sup> Enrique Montero, "Reform idealized. The Intellectual and Ideological Origins of the Second Republic" in *Spanish Cultural Studies*, 129.

disregard for legality back lashed and led many to associate the rule of law with democratic reforms and a non-arbitrary constitutional system.

Many military officers realised the negative consequences of the delegates' experience. Officers were simply not prepared to carry out governmental and administrative tasks at the local level and their acts caused dismay among civilians.<sup>160</sup> Members of the government also perceived the lack of political and administrative preparation of the delegates, who tended to run the country as a military barracks. As mentioned above, Calvo Sotelo was one of the first to realise the negative effect the delegates were having on the popular image of the Dictatorship and as early as 1924 asked Primo to dissolve the institution.<sup>161</sup> General Mola also noticed that the delegates' actions increased the civilians' animosity towards the entire military.<sup>162</sup> An institution designed to nationalise the people with military values ended up producing the reverse effect, that is, a reinforcement of civilian values.

### **Pre-military education and patriotic gymnastics**

The figure of the governmental delegate was conceived as a 'shock treatment' to regenerate local life. Initially, Primo declared the institution of the 'apostles of the fatherland' provisional and the gradual reduction in the number of delegates seemed to indicate that the institution would one day be finally abolished. However, nationalist indoctrination was always a factor of extreme importance in the dictator's policies. While the delegates were carrying out their commissions, much more ambitious plans of mass indoctrination were developed. From 1925 onwards, the regime began the design of an educational system that would instruct every child and youngster in nationalist values. The result was the creation of the *Servicio Nacional de Educación Física Ciudadana y Premilitar*, (SNEFCP) - a state military organisation designed to morally and physically improve the 'race'.

As mentioned above, the idea of educating youngsters in military values before becoming recruits was present in military literature prior to the dictatorship. As in many other European countries, pre-military education was present in Spain before WWI. This was an education given by the state-funded National Shooting Association

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<sup>160</sup> Francisco Hernández Mir, *Un crimen de lesa patria* [Madrid: 1930], 156-159.

<sup>161</sup> Calvo Sotelo, *Mis Servicios*, 25.

(*Tiro Nacional de España*, TNE) and private colleges, which entitled a reduction in the time spent in military service to those who took a series of courses and gunfire practice. As with many other institutions in Spain during the Restoration, the system did not work. Fraud in obtaining the degrees to avoid some months of military service was widespread in private colleges and only the rich could benefit. Moreover, the TNE lacked the economic and human resources for setting up schools to offer premilitary education to the lower classes.<sup>163</sup>

Determined to overturn the inefficient conditions of pre-military education, Primo reorganised the system. According to the regime, pre-military instruction was too theoretical and very little attention was paid to physical and “moral” education. On top of this, private colleges were badly equipped and very expensive, so precluding the lower classes from joining pre-military education.<sup>164</sup> The guiding principles of the *primorriverista* reform were “unification of doctrine”, interclass integration and bringing schools under direct control of the state. Seeking “unity of doctrine”, a Royal Decree of 8 May 1925 established that all pre-military education teachers had to be military officers, including those instructing in private schools, and placed all schools under direct control of the Military High Command (*Estado Mayor*).<sup>165</sup> The following month, a Royal Order specified the academic programme to be taught in pre-military schools. Not surprisingly, the military directory introduced a new study plan, which strongly emphasised the teaching of physical education and “citizenry education” – the latter drawing heavily upon love for the fatherland, discipline, honour and loyalty, among other concepts.<sup>166</sup>

The pre-military educational system reform also underlined the educational role of the state. The state would provide its own schools free of charge in order to make the instruction available to the lower classes. Regarding private colleges, the government cancelled all licences for pre-military teaching. Only those private academies linked to “patriotic societies”, such as the TNE, were allowed to offer pre-military instruction, and even in those cases were forbidden to charge for it.<sup>167</sup> Finally,

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<sup>162</sup> Mola, *Obras completas*, 1028. Very similar views were shared by the officers Pardo González, Blanco, and Major Beta (pseudonym) in their critique of the delegates. Navajas, 99-100.

<sup>163</sup> See reports by the national assembly of the TNE in *El Tiro Nacional de España* [Madrid: 1915], 74, and *Tiro Nacional de España* [Madrid: 1918], 23-27, 47-69.

<sup>164</sup> *Primorriverista* criticism of the Restoration pre-military education in the preamble of the RD 8-5-1925, *CLE*, 1925, n. 117, 151-155.

<sup>165</sup> Art. 5 and 8, RD 8-5-1925.

<sup>166</sup> ROC 27-6-1925, *CLE*, 1925, Appendix 6, 3-16.

<sup>167</sup> Art. 6 and 10, RD 8-5-1925.

the government attempted to tackle cheating in pre-military education by reserving for itself the last word on service reduction. Students with a pre-military degree were to be examined at the barracks by army officers before they were given any sort of concession.<sup>168</sup>

These measures sought to improve an inefficient system. However, Primo made very clear that the 1925 reform was being enacted on a provisional basis and promised extensive changes in two years time.<sup>169</sup> What the government wanted was an entirely new educational model, not merely an upgrading of the Restoration one. At the same time as legal modifications were introduced, Primo created an inter-ministerial commission aiming at organising a new pre-military and physical instruction in every educational centre in the country, from elementary schools to universities.<sup>170</sup> After the aforementioned 1926 field trip to European military academies, the commission concluded that the improvement of the “race” required drastic measures. It drew up a plan which established compulsory gymnastics for all Spaniards of both sexes from the ages of 6 to 18. Moreover, the state would enforce mandatory patriotic gymnastics in private associations and companies. Even as part of young ladies’ “domestic teachings”, physical education now became obligatory. All children and teenagers would be given a biometric card so that the government could follow their physical and moral development.<sup>171</sup> The entire society would be under direct governmental scrutiny, regardless of gender, class, or profession.

Pre-military education was conceived as the continuation of physical instruction. From the age of 18, male teenagers would join state-controlled paramilitary organisations, where they would develop their nationalist and militarist ideology further. In this manner, the dictatorship sought not only to shape “obedient patriots”, but also to increase the number of army reservists. Villalba considered the Italian pre-military education the best in Europe, for it provided the would-be reservists with solid discipline and a high level of solidarity. However, he lamented that the Italian pre-military education could not be fully applied in Spain, since the fascist model was run by both the army and the Volunteer Militia for the National Security of the State, the latter a particularly trans-alpine institution.<sup>172</sup> Instead,

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<sup>168</sup> Art. 13, RD 8-5-1925.

<sup>169</sup> RD 8-5-1925.

<sup>170</sup> RD 8-5-1925.

<sup>171</sup> Aguilera, *Memoria*, 61; Villalba y Riquelme, *Organización de la Educación*, 42-50.

<sup>172</sup> *Ibid.*, 59.

Villalba proposed tighter state intervention, total military control of the Spanish system, and suggested pre-military instruction should eventually become mandatory for all male adolescents in the country.<sup>173</sup> Finally, the commission's plans also included a post-military education for those who had finished their military service in the garrisons but were yet to have their annual reviews. Post-military instruction was to be given by the same centres teaching pre-military education to civilians up to the age of 38.

In March 1927, Primo formed the Citizenry, Physical and Pre-military Commission, with the specific task of drafting a blueprint for the new legislation on physical and pre-military education. The dictator named General Agustín Luque president of the Commission and General Villalba vice-president. In theory, the creation of this Commission was a good idea, since it included the president of the TNE, Luque, and the director of the Military Central School of Gymnastics, Villalba, who should have designed a definitive project for the pre-military educational system. In practice, different views on how the system should be framed and the struggle to control it led to a 'civil war' inside the Commission, which ultimately delayed the implementation of the pre-military education programme.<sup>174</sup>

If Villalba and Luque were to agree on one point, however, it was on the importance of female indoctrination. The view of women as the keystone of the "Spanish race's physical regeneration" was common among *primorrriveristas*. Both as girls and would-be mothers, it was argued, females had to be "scientifically" trained to improve their bodies and adequately educate their sons.<sup>175</sup> Hence, the Commission encouraged the creation of a "Female Association", which would foster "intellectual, moral and citizenry education" and prepare women to fulfil "their high social mission" - i.e. being patriotic mothers.<sup>176</sup> The Commission took further steps along these lines and sent the plan "Female Physical Education National Project" to the dictator. Drafted by the school inspector Cándida Cárdenas Campo, the report

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<sup>173</sup> *Ibid.*, 62-67.

<sup>174</sup> For the dispute between Luque and Villalba about the role the TNE should play in the pre-military educational system and the fight to control the commission see "Bases que para el desarrollo en España de la Educación Ciudadana, Física y Premilitar presenta la Comisión nombrada al efecto al Excmo. Señor Presidente del Consejo de Ministros", AHN, Presidencia del Gobierno, Bundle 202, Box 1, File 14971. For Villalba's objections see "Voto particular del General Villalba a las recomendaciones de la Comisión", 14-6-1927, AHN, Presidencia del Gobierno, Bundle 204, Box 1.

<sup>175</sup> Aguilera, *Memoria*, 63.

considered women, “as citizens, [have] the same obligation as men to defend their patria and contribute to its progress”.<sup>177</sup> Ms Cárdenas put forward a scheme of physical and political indoctrination, in which girls and youngsters would be educated from the ages of 3 to 25. This indoctrination would take place “at home and in all private and public schools, from kindergarten to university”. Their physical development and the fulfilment of their patriotic duties would be monitored on a biometric card. Those failing to present the card would be automatically excluded not only from all state, provincial and municipal posts, but also from workshops and factories. Even marriage would be forbidden for those lacking the appropriate physical record. Mothers, Cárdenas penned, had the unavoidable duty to educate their sons in “vigour, health and energy” and those not well-prepared were failing the nation and, therefore, should not be allowed to marry.

In general terms, Cárdenas’ proposal reflected the biological ideological trends so much in vogue all around Europe in the 1920s. These pseudo-scientific theories stressed the need to redeem racial decadence and considered maternity to be a patriotic duty.<sup>178</sup> Nevertheless, the implications of Cárdenas’ plan were an unprecedented state intervention in controlling the lives of Spaniards at work, school and home. If the plan was to be implemented possibilities of a clash between the state and the Catholic Church, and between the government and employers seemed high. Contrary to the passive role Fascism awarded women as “reproducers of the nation”, the *primorrivist*s envisaged the “making” of the patriotic mother as a radical state-led process, which blurred public and private spheres in a way not conceived in 1920s Italy.<sup>179</sup>

It was not, however, until November 1928 that the dictator created the National Physical Culture Committee. Primo decided to place it under direct control

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<sup>176</sup> Bases 14 and 15 of “Bases que para el desarrollo en España de la Educación Ciudadana, Física y Premilitar presenta la Comisión nombrada al efecto al Excmo. Señor Presidente del Consejo de Ministros”, in AHN, Presidencia del Gobierno, Bundle 202, Box 1, File 14971.

<sup>177</sup> “Proyecto nacional de Educación Física Femenina. Madrid 6-6-1927, por la Inspectora de 1ª Enseñanza Cándida Cárdenas y Campo”, AHN, Presidencia del Gobierno, Bundle 202, Box 1, File 14972.

<sup>178</sup> For the reception of these European ideas in Spain see Inmaculada Blasco Herranz, “Tenemos las armas de nuestra fe y nuestro patriotismo; pero nos falta algo”, *Historia Social*, n. 44, 2002, 4-6. See also Mary Nash, “Un/Contested Identities: Motherhood, Sex Reform and the Modernization of Gender Identity in Early Twentieth-Century Spain”, in Victoria Enders and Pamela Radcliff (eds.), *Constructing Spanish Womanhood* [Albany: 1999], 25-49.

<sup>179</sup> For the Italian case see, Lesley Caldwell, “Reproducers of the Nation: Women and the Family in Fascist Italy”, in David Forgacs (ed.), *Rethinking Italian Fascism* [London: 1986], 110-141.

of the Bureau of the President and named Villalba director.<sup>180</sup> Simultaneously, an internal report of the Bureau of the President provided the guidelines on which the National Service for Physical, Citizenry and Pre-military Education (SNEFCP) would be framed. It established the need to directly transmit the national leader's ideas to the people, assuring "unity of doctrine", and proposed all books, documents and conference topics had to be selected by the Bureau of the President.<sup>181</sup> In January 1929, the government established the organisation of citizenry education for adults and pre-military and gymnastic instruction for youngsters in all non-provincial capital judicial districts. Once again the regime prioritised the indoctrination of the rural masses over industrial workers. Those Majors in a situation of "forced availability" (*disponibles forzosos*) could apply for the post on a voluntary basis with the important incentive of regaining their full salary – as opposed to the 80% of the wages paid as *disponibles forzosos*. Their duties included lecturing to adults and coordinating and directing patriotic gymnastics and pre-military education in the judicial districts.<sup>182</sup>

The mission of these officers was very similar to that assigned to the government delegates in terms of promoting gymnastics and organising patriotic conferences. When in the last weeks of January 1929 Villalba developed the programme, he chose to give the SNEFCP the same hierarchical structure of delegates. Thus, SNEFCP officers were responsible to the provincial governors, who, in turn, were accountable to Villalba. The latter only had Primo commanding him. Seeking to have as much impact as possible, Villalba ordered SNEFCP officers to require assistance from the mayors and the UP local leaders in order to gather the masses in nationalist conferences which would take place on Sundays and other holidays. As for pre-military education, Villalba believed this "instruction must be addressed to the masses, to the totality, and not to obtain a few exceptional individuals." Above military doctrine, gunmanship and gymnastics, Villalba emphasised the importance of "moral education", designed "to develop in the

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<sup>180</sup> The Physical Culture Committee was created and placed under the direct control of Presidencia by the RD 3-11-1928, *DOME*, 6-11-1928, n. 243, 341-342.

<sup>181</sup> "Origen del excedente de la oficialidad en las escalas del Ejército", AHN, Presidencia del Gobierno, Bundle 190, Box 1.

<sup>182</sup> Royal Decree, 14-1-1929, Preamble and articles 1, 4, 7, *DOME*, 16-1-1929, n. 12, 137.



audience the feeling of love for the fatherland [...] and everything else which tends to make them proud of being Spaniards.”<sup>183</sup>

The *delegados* had received much criticism due to their lack of preparation as educators of civilians. Villalba was resolved not to let this happen with the new ‘apostles of the fatherland’. In February 1929, he began to prepare a course to indoctrinate SNEFCP officers before they were posted to their districts. This course was to be divided into political and physical education and included lectures by regime ideologues and classes given by the members of the Central School of Gymnastics. Villalba personally drafted the topics of the political lectures.<sup>184</sup> The selection of subjects on which the director of the National Physical Culture Committee wanted his men indoctrinated is self-explanatory. The first conference should focus on national unity; the second on the doctrine of the father of Portuguese *integralismo* Antonio Sardinha; the third on ecclesiastical doctrine, aiming to explain to Catholics that “submission to constituted powers” was a moral duty and that there was no religious impediment in supporting the *primorriverista* regime; the fourth simply sought to expound upon Fascist minister Alfredo Rocco’s ideas on the corporative state. Primo was delighted with the syllabus. He personally wrote to the regime’s main ideologues to demand their participation in the conferences and opened the course with a short lecture.<sup>185</sup>

The course took place between the 10<sup>th</sup> and the 30<sup>th</sup> of March 1929 in Toledo. The training gathered together about 50 officers of the SNEFCP who were lectured by the dictatorship’s intelligentsia in the Alcázar.<sup>186</sup> The government was so pleased with the results that it decided to publish the lectures in a book and distributed 20,000 copies among the civil governors for propaganda purposes. Concurrently, captains and majors of the Central School of Gymnastics trained SNEFCP officers on teaching physical education. The training here included both theory and practice and the Central School of Gymnastics used its most modern educational techniques, such as

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<sup>183</sup> General José Villalba to Primo, 2-2-1929, “Minutas sobre el cumplimiento del Real Decreto de 14 de Enero de 1929 sobre conferencias patrióticas e instrucción premilitar”, AHN, Presidencia del Gobierno, Bundle 190, Box 1.

<sup>184</sup> Villalba’s manuscript, “Programa sobre una formación de ciudadanía española”, in AHN, Presidencia del Gobierno, Bundle 190, Box 1.

<sup>185</sup> Primo to Antonio Horcada, 2-3-29, AHN, Presidencia del Gobierno, Bundle 190, Box 1.

<sup>186</sup> The lectures were given by Eduardo Pérez Angulo, José Pemartín, Álvaro López Núñez, Juan Francisco Correas Fernández, Eduardo Aunos, Manuel Suirot Rodríguez, Antonio Horcada Mateo, José Villalba Riquelme, José María Pemán, José Vicente Arche, José Calvo Sotelo and José Yanguas Messía.

filmed documentaries on teaching gymnastics and the application of research devices from the physiological laboratory.<sup>187</sup> The courses had a good reception amongst the conservative military press, which described the topics of the lectures as “a real gospel of citizenry brought to the rural soul” of the nation. The Gallic, *Le Journal*, was a bit more analytical and portrayed the new Spanish pre-military educational system as “inspired on the French model in terms of practical training and based on Fascist principles in terms of moral education”.<sup>188</sup>

The course in Toledo certainly provided SNEFCP officers with a better preparation as “apostles of the fatherland” than the delegates ever had. By June some SNEFCP officers were already working in their districts and, in July, Villalba published a Royal Order designed to cover the vacancies of SNEFCP Local Leaders as soon as possible.<sup>189</sup> Yet when the new agency was put into action, old problems arose. SNEFCP officers needed active cooperation from the municipal governments if they were to succeed in their propagandist mission. In March, the dictatorship ordered both civil governors and mayors to coordinate their efforts in helping the officers. Provincial and local authorities were instructed to provide premises for patriotic conferences, rifle ranges and gyms. In addition, they were required to publicise officially pre-military courses and adult conferences.<sup>190</sup> But for all governmental pressure, many mayors refused to provide the necessary facilities arguing that there was no money in the annual municipal budget to be spent on this issue. By early July the number of municipalities declining cooperation was such that Martínez Anido ordered the civil governors to force municipal councils to include a special item for acquiring sports premises in the following year’s budget. In the interim, civil governors should press local associations and individuals to temporarily and freely hand over their ranges and gyms to SNEFCP officers.<sup>191</sup>

Increasing pressure on municipal treasuries was not the only factor leading to the failure of the SNEFCP. For all Primo’s support, Villalba was unable to properly arrange the SNEFCP. As late as December 1929, a Royal Order commissioned the “definitive organisation” of the SNEFCP to the National Physical Cultural Committee

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<sup>187</sup> For the training see “Dossier con conferencias y demostraciones prácticas” and Primo to Carlos Guerra Zagala, director of the Central School of Gymnastics, April 1929. Both in AHN, Presidencia del Gobierno, Bundle 190, Box 1,

<sup>188</sup> Quoted in Navajas, *Ejército*, 110.

<sup>189</sup> RO 8-7-1929, *DOMÉ*, 10-7-1929, n. 148, 101.

<sup>190</sup> RCO 2-3-1929, *CLE*, 1929, n. 84, 137-138.

<sup>191</sup> RO 12-7-1929, *DOMÉ*, 14-7-1929, n. 152, 139.

and provisionally suspended all further incorporation of officers into the service. When the dictatorship fell in January 1930 the SNEFCP had only 267 officers distributed throughout Spain and, by the end of that year, 50% of the Spanish judicial districts had yet to be assigned an officer.<sup>192</sup>

Berenguer's government reformed the *primorriverista* model of pre-military and adult education and reorganised the National Physical Cultural Committee.<sup>193</sup> Once again Berenguer tried to get rid of the most radical *primorriverista* innovations in his attempt to return to the old Restoration system. It is telling that the first measures taken by the new government were scrapping "citizen indoctrination" from the educational plans and the incorporation of schoolteachers into the pre-military programme.<sup>194</sup> The officers of the SNEFCP, now renamed the National Service of Physical and Pre-military Education (NSEFP), were not to lecture or train anymore. They were transformed into "inspectors" whose job it was to supervise civilian teachers.<sup>195</sup> In addition to political reasons, the motives behind the reform were also economic. According to Berenguer, the *primorriverista* system cost the government 950,000 pesetas per year and the state simply could not afford such expenditure on a model that was not working and depended on the altruism of municipalities and private societies. The reformed system would just concentrate on pre-military education and incorporate civilian instructors. But the Berenguer system was also doomed to failure. In January 1931, the new dictator ordered the 327 infantry officers of the SNEFP to cease their activities. Three months later, the provisional Republican government suspended the National Physical Cultural Committee *sine die* and dissolved the SNEFP.<sup>196</sup>

The *primorriverista* dream of imbuing all Spaniards with nationalist and militarist values never came true. Most of the mass indoctrination plans, whether concerning children, teenagers or adults were never realised. When attempted in their most basic form, the complexity of the task and the lack of state resources led to failure. Under-funded, short lived, badly organised and dependent on municipal charity to function, the SNEFCP could not have a real impact on the population.

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<sup>192</sup> *Anuario Militar de España 1930* and ROC 2-12-1930, *CLE*, 1929, n. 410, 537.

<sup>193</sup> ROC 20-10-1930, *CLE*, 1930, n. 353, 496-498.

<sup>194</sup> ROC 13-11-1930, *CLE*, 1929, N 377, 537.

<sup>195</sup> ROC 2-12-1930, *CLE*, 1929, N 410, 537.

<sup>196</sup> Navajas, *Ejército*, 113.

## CONCLUSION: A NEGATIVE NATIONALISATION

What were the consequences of using the army as the main agency of nationalisation in and outside the barracks? The educational role Primo endowed the army with had an important cost for the military itself. Scholars have pointed out that military officers as a whole came out of the dictatorship even more politicised than they were in 1923.<sup>197</sup> This was partly due to Primo's military policies. The different factions that amalgamated themselves behind Primo in September 1923 were disunited in 1930. The artillerymen advanced towards republican positions after they felt the king had betrayed them in supporting Primo's suppression of the corps and their regimental school. The *junteros*, most of them infantrymen, begrudged the dictator's gradual support of the Africanists. This was an essential factor in the disruption of the regime's educational system because the great majority of military teachers, *delegados* and officers of the SNEFCP belonged to the infantry corps. Only the Africanists, delighted with the dictator's interventionist policies in Morocco from 1924 onwards and in control of the AGM, seemed happy with Primo's military policies. But the *primorriverista* indoctrination of officers and the direct military intervention in governing and educating the masses at all social levels also played an undeniable part in the army's politicisation. The experience of hundreds of officers in local government partially explains the widespread military predisposition to intervene in politics during the 1930s.<sup>198</sup> *Primorriverista* values concerning the military's messianic mission and the National Catholic idea of Spain seem to have permeated the minds of many officers. In 1931, the Republican Minister of War, Manuel Azaña, complained about the difficulties he found in reforming the military, since most of the officers were obsessed with religion, valour, and elitism and therefore were unable to understand the needs of a modern democratic army.<sup>199</sup> The fact that the great majority of those graduated from the AGM eventually fought on the Nationalist side does nothing but illustrate the nature and the influence of the *primorriverista* military education. For soldiers, the influence of the *primorriverista* educational system was rather different. The regime reformed both the recruitment and the educational system and brought military ceremonies to the streets. It

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<sup>197</sup> Gabriel Cardona, *El poder militar en la España contemporánea hasta la guerra civil* [Madrid: 1983], 104-105.

<sup>198</sup> Balbé, *Orden público*, 309.

<sup>199</sup> Azaña also complained about the scarce education of the officers, who were not even required to be high school graduates when joining military academies. Cardona, *El poder militar*, 132-133.

succeeded in raising the number of young men joining the army, but the military's educational budget did not match the increase, making physical and moral indoctrination ineffective. It should also be remembered that the dictatorship maintained monetary redemptions and corruption and favouritism were far from eradicated from the barracks. As a result, the dictatorship could not reverse popular contempt for military service.

How successful might the army be considered as an agency of nationalisation outside the barracks? An overall consideration of the actions of the delegates and the SNEFCP officers indicates that the use of the army to indoctrinate the masses was a failure. True, the delegates managed to stage some nationalist ceremonies and partially mobilised the population, especially in rural areas. And yet the public image of the delegates soon deteriorated owing to indiscriminate repression, accusations of corruption and the financial strain put upon the municipal treasuries. This process was abetted by the very nature of the delegates' work, which merged the role of political commissariat with that of "missionary of the fatherland", and thus combined repression and instruction in the same figure. When the regime created an institution specifically devoted to nationalisation, the SNEFCP faced the same problems of under-funding and had no time to make an impact. Military intervention outside the barracks actually produced the reverse effect to what it sought to accomplish. As mentioned above, some military officers and members of the government noticed that the work of the delegates besmirched not only the regime but also the entire army. It also led to the discrediting of the National Catholic idea of Spain. Since the *primorriverista* officers constantly presented nation, regime and army as the very same thing, the drop in popular support for the regime led to a fall of support for this idea of Spain that the delegates were propagating. Thus the effects of the military indoctrination of civil society were what might be called a "negative nationalisation", in which increasing opposition to the state agents propagating the official canon of the nation accompanied the rejection of the very idea of nation defended by those agents. The fact that all those groups challenging the official concept of Spain, and prosecuted by the "apostles of the fatherland", (i.e. peripheral nationalists, regionalists, Republicans, Carlists, Anarchists, etc) re-emerged stronger than ever immediately after Primo's dictatorship shows the negative effects that military propaganda had achieved in the process of state nationalisation. Moreover, conservative monarchists, Social-Catholics, Socialists, and liberals agreed on one

point immediately after the fall of Primo: the army should never again intervene in politics.<sup>200</sup> As an editorial of the monarchist *ABC* put it, the regime's policies had turned the army into a state institution "incompatible with the nation".<sup>201</sup> Primo's militarist policies led to a consensus on the supremacy of civil power.

This is not to say that the *primorriverista* use of the army as agency of nationalisation can be overlooked. The regime's plans were unparalleled in Spanish history both in terms of scope and ambition. The dictatorship sought inspiration in some other European countries and chiefly found it in Fascist Italy. The SNEFCP was partially built on the Italian model and plans to indoctrinate women, although more radical in Spain, were based on the same conception of mothers as "procreators of the nation". In some other cases, such as the Sunday lectures, the dictatorship's policies anticipated those eventually adopted in Italy in the 1930s. The desire to shape Spaniards' minds and bodies led the government to envisage a society militarily monitored and instructed from the cradle to the age of 38. In this respect, the regime advanced towards a position of totalitarian control over the Spaniards' lives.

It has been argued that one of the main differences between *Primorriverismo* and Francoism was that in the 1920s the army regarded itself as the "interpreter" of the national will, whereas in the 1940s the army would consider itself the "maker" of the national will.<sup>202</sup> This might have been the case of the military conspirators in September 1923. However, if we consider the *primorriverista* plans for mass indoctrination, the record suggests the regime was willing to forge, if not the "national will", at least the national identity. In fact, the idea of forging civil society on military values was kept alive by the *primorriverista* intelligentsia during the Second Republic and the Civil War. In the electoral campaign of January 1936, Calvo Sotelo, then leader of the Alfonsine Monarchists, declared military values had to shape civil society and on these bases the "New State" would be founded.<sup>203</sup> During the Civil War, Pemartín also advocated a "profound militarization of the state" that would

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<sup>200</sup> *ABC*, 29-1-1930; *El Debate*, 30-1-1930; *El Liberal*, 29-1-1930; *El Sol*, 2-2-1930; *El Socialista*, 31-1-1930.

<sup>201</sup> *ABC*, 31-1-1930.

<sup>202</sup> Gómez-Navarro, *El régimen*, 318-320.

<sup>203</sup> Calvo Sotelo's comments in Joaquim Lleixà, *Cien años de militarismo en España* [Barcelona: 1986], 135.

emerge from the Nationalist side.<sup>204</sup> There was nothing new, then, when Francisco Franco stated in 1942 that military values should shape civil society.<sup>205</sup>

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<sup>204</sup> Pemartín, *Qué es 'lo nuevo'*, 15-29.

<sup>205</sup> Blanco, *La Academia*, 194.

## CHAPTER 5. STATE NATIONALISATION OF THE MASSES: THE EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM

*“Schools must be nationalised. Every single one, whatever the type, in which children are not educated in Catholicism and love for Spain must and will be shut down”*

(Suárez Somonte)<sup>1</sup>

### INTRODUCTION

Socio-economic transformations, brought about by industrialization, and political changes, linked to the emergence of the liberal state, paved the way for the creation of a modern system of public schooling in nineteenth-century Europe. The national educational system was designed not only to match these social changes and to complement the needs of a literate population, but also as a way to achieve social cohesion within the national ideal. Teaching the official culture and indoctrinating the masses in patriotic values became essential in the process of nation-building, as the social cement in which allegiances to the state were formed.<sup>2</sup> The process of “creating nationals” in public schools had two, intertwined main mechanisms. First, oral and written transmission of the official language took place in schools controlled by the state, leading to cultural and linguistic homogenisation of the population. Second, state control over the curriculum provided the government with an enormous power when selecting which “histories” of the nation were taught, which sort of cultural values were transmitted as ‘national’, and which ideas and beliefs were considered part of the nation’s identity.<sup>3</sup>

And yet historical analyses have shown that state educational systems were far from being completely effective in the process of nationalisation in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. The lower classes seldom found sending their sons and daughters to the school worthwhile, since it deprived them of an important source of manpower and disrupted family economies. In France, for

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<sup>1</sup> Quoted in Ramón López Martín, *Ideología y educación en la Dictadura de Primo de Rivera (I). Escuelas y Maestros* [Valencia: 1994], 35.

<sup>2</sup> Gellner, *Nations*, 18-39.



instance, most children in the countryside worked in the fields nine months per year and many peasants considered educating their sons and daughters useless.<sup>4</sup> Nor was it that linguistic acculturation made great progress either. In many rural areas, the majority of the adults and many children were unable to speak French and remained using their local languages and dialects well into the twentieth century.<sup>5</sup>

European states also met the resistance of the Church, which struggled to retain its traditional control over education. In Italy, liberal governments saw their promotion of national identity in primary schools severely challenged by the Catholic Church, which steadily and successfully opposed the educational expansion of the central state. It was not until Mussolini and the Vatican reached a compromise in the 1920s that the problem was partially solved, and even then, tensions in educational prerogatives between the Catholic hierarchy and the Fascists remained throughout the 1930s.<sup>6</sup> In France, the secular educational policies of the Third Republic finally triumphed at the turn of the century, only to produce a strong reaction from the Right, which promoted a clericalist view of a 'true' France as the only hope for national renewal.<sup>7</sup>

The Spanish educational system faced very similar problems to those of its European neighbours. The lower classes realised that child school attendance meant a lost day of income from his/her labour and schoolbooks and materials were a serious burden on many family budgets.<sup>8</sup> However, Spain had a lower number of children attending school and illiteracy rates were the highest in Western Europe at the beginning of the twentieth century.<sup>9</sup> Chronically under-funded, the national educational system could not make much progress in expanding the Castilian language in rural areas of Catalonia, Galicia and the Basque Country. In addition, the battle among those advocating a secular education and the clericalists in the

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<sup>3</sup> Prasenjit Durara, "Historizing National Identity, or Who Imagines What and When" in *Becoming National*, 151-177; Eduardo Manzano Moreno, "La construcción histórica del pasado nacional", in *La gestión de la memoria*, 33-62.

<sup>4</sup> Weber, *Peasants*, 321-326.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, 306-314.

<sup>6</sup> Giuseppe Talamo, "Riforma della scuola e sistemi politici", in Fernando García Sanz (ed.), *España e Italia en la Europa contemporánea: desde finales del siglo XIX a las dictaduras* [Madrid: 2002], 419-426.

<sup>7</sup> Herman Lebovics, *True France, The Wars over cultural identity, 1900-1945* [Ithaca & London: 1992], xiii, 7.

<sup>8</sup> Rial, *Revolution*, 215.

<sup>9</sup> The number of primary education students in France, Germany and Italy in 1905 was as follows: France 1,422 students per 10,000 inhabitants; Germany 1,577; and Italy 928. The figure for Spain in 1909-1910 is 746 students per 10,000 inhabitants. Data in Clara Eugenia Núñez, *Educación y desarrollo económico en la España contemporánea* [Madrid: 1992], 292-293.

second half of the nineteenth century did not end in a decisive victory for either, though the Catholic Church was granted a prominent voice within the Restoration system. As in the Italian case, the Catholic hierarchy acted as a parallel and independent power from the state. The Church had a fundamental say in the national school curricula, and priests sat in the national Public Instruction Council and all municipal and provincial educational councils. Priests were responsible for censoring schoolbooks and teaching the mandatory subject of Catholic religion in both public and private schools.<sup>10</sup> Hence the promotion of civic values associated with the preponderance of the nation as the ultimate source of state legitimacy was seriously hindered.

When Primo took power, the deficiencies of the national educational system as an agency of mass nationalisation were evident to all political groups. The role of education as the key for national renewal had been at the centre of the political debate for decades – acquiring a special impetus after 1898. The *primorriverista* restructuring of the educational system has to be understood as a strategic part of the dictator's plans for Spain's regeneration. Changes in the national curriculum, indoctrination of teachers, development of state schools and expansion of Castilian language became the hallmarks of a reform aimed at increasing the nationalisation of the masses. The present chapter analyses these transformations. The first part analyses the educational principles of the *primorriverista* regime and the surveillance measures imposed on teachers. The second section deals with the new ceremonies and patriotic books introduced into schools to promote national identity. A third part explores the reception among teachers of the expansion of the state educational system in terms of schools and budget. The fourth section analyses the changes in the secondary education curriculum and the reaction it provoked in the Catholic Right. The last pages of the chapter look at the implementation of official linguistic policies and the political implications the process of "Spanishization" had in Catalonia.

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<sup>10</sup> Manuel de Puelles Benítez, "Secularización de la enseñanza en España 1875-1917)" in *España entre dos siglos (1875-1931)*, 197.

## EDUCATIONAL PRINCIPLES AND THE CONTROL OF TEACHERS

Primo's regenerationist views were clearly reflected in the regime's educational policies. He believed that educational reform was essential to the formation of 'new Spaniards'. The dictator took an active role in the educational reform and got involved in the institutionalisation of a formative public school system that sought to overcome the cleavages in Spanish society and imbue the population with a common national identity.<sup>11</sup> For the *primorriveristas* the indoctrination of the masses in National-Catholic values and the transformation of the educational system could only be achieved with the intervention of the state. The regime's discourse always prioritised the formation of a strong state as the essential device for social indoctrination. Thus, the Church should be subordinate to the state on educational matters and the government must have last word in the contents of the public school curricula.<sup>12</sup>

This is not to say that the regime opposed teaching religion in public schools. On the contrary, the ideological architects of National Catholicism maintained religious education should be mandatory as an essential part of the nationalist indoctrination of Spanish children. The ideologues of the regime argued that if Catholicism was consubstantial with the Spanish nation, then religion should be taught as part of patriotic education.<sup>13</sup> Together with a strong religious education, the *primorriveristas* advocated the introduction of military values of honour, obedience and sacrifice in primary schools, as the initial steps in the formation of a citizen-soldier.<sup>14</sup> In addition, ideologues of the regime recommended fostering the presence of Spanish history and literature in the curricula, introducing Spanish-American History into the educational plans, and imposing Castilian language in all public schools.<sup>15</sup>

The *primorriverista* educational programme faced important obstacles in its implementation. First, the immense power the Church in educational matters and the

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<sup>11</sup> Boyd, *Historia*, 166.

<sup>12</sup> Primo de Rivera, *Disertación*, 16; Adán and Tarrasa, *Ciudadanía*, 96-97; Mask, *Hacia la España nueva*, 277-281.

<sup>13</sup> Pemán, *El hecho*, 308-314; Pemartín, *Los valores*, 423; Rodríguez Tarduchy, *Psicología*, 249; Manuel Siurot Rodríguez, "La escuela y sus problemas básicos" in Pérez Agudo et al., *Curso de ciudadanía*, 181.

<sup>14</sup> Francisco Caballero Infante, *Educación cívica y su alcance en la Escuela Primaria* [Sevilla: 1924].

<sup>15</sup> Pemán, *El hecho*, 308-314. For the proposal, later adopted by the government, of the introduction of Spanish American history in the curriculum see Pérez Agudo, "Lamentable estado de la Enseñanza. Los estudios Hispano-Americanos", *Revista de Segunda Enseñanza*, January 1926; Blanca de los Ríos, "Nuestra raza es española (Ni latina ni ibera)", *Revista de Segunda Enseñanza*, June 1926.

feeble state structure made it impossible for the regime to run the school system without ecclesiastical cooperation. Second, the political support all Catholic groups initially gave to the dictatorship would be put at risk should the dictatorship drastically limit the Church's educational influence. As in other instances, Primo sought to integrate the Church within the system. In the words of the dictator, priests and teachers should combine their efforts to inculcate love for the patria and the regime in the children's minds.<sup>16</sup> In practical terms, the policies of the regime sought expanding public education at the same time as granting measures favourable to the Church. The price of integration and cooperation was maintaining ecclesiastical privileges in private schools, while enforcing state authority in the entire educational system. The *delegados* were granted the power of supervising teaching materials and curricula. Moreover, the delegates were ordered to punish all those educators, secular or ecclesiastical, who propagated ideas against the official doctrine. Military officers became the supreme local authorities on educational matters, controlling both public and private schools.

### **Control and repression of primary education teachers**

In his role as the Iron Surgeon, Primo believed that to 'cure' the educational system he first had to remove the "cancerous cells" from the national body. The first educational measures taken by the dictatorship aimed to stop the spread of so-called 'unpatriotic doctrines' in the schools and impose Castilian as the only language in the classrooms. Issued less than a week after the coup, the 'decree against separatism' contemplated prison sentences for those propagating secessionist doctrines in schools.<sup>17</sup> Two days later, a circular reminded primary school teachers that it was compulsory to teach in Castilian and forbade Catalanist books and schools.<sup>18</sup> In October 1925, a royal order perfectly encapsulated the ideas behind the *primorriverista* educational policy: the main goal of the state was to seek its own preservation and the government had to pursue this objective above all others. The state demanded an obligatory cooperation from all citizens, most especially from public officers who had the duty to serve it loyally in every single moment of their lives. Teachers had to be "a paladin of civic virtues" in and outside the school. Those publicizing ideas against the unity of the fatherland (whether actively or by omitting "essential facts in the explanation of

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<sup>16</sup> *La Nación*, 1-1-1929.

<sup>17</sup> Art. 2, RD 18-9-1923, *Gaceta*, 19-9-1923.

<sup>18</sup> Circular 20-10-1923, *BOMIP*, 16-11-1923, 833-834.

Geography and History”), or attacking Catholicism, private property and family values were committing a crime against the state and the nation.<sup>19</sup>

In order to secure an adequate implementation of the above legislation, the dictatorship created mechanisms for monitoring teachers. Once again, the figure of the *delegado* became paramount in terms of both propaganda and repression. The delegates were soon commissioned with the task of inspecting public and private schools and penalizing those teachers propagating “antipatriotic ideas”.<sup>20</sup> Indeed, throughout the entire dictatorship Primo and Martínez Anido encouraged the delegates to devote their efforts to mass indoctrination.<sup>21</sup> As shown in chapter 4, the delegates were extremely active in delivering official propaganda and organising nationalist ceremonies in rural and urban areas. Moreover, they were keen to gain the much-needed *maestros*’ support for the organisation of patriotic lectures for adults and children, something they managed to obtain on many occasions.<sup>22</sup>

Primo took a personal interest in controlling teachers. He set up a surveillance scheme that sought to reward and punish teachers according to their political loyalty towards the dictatorship and their competence in propagating nationalist ideas. In 1924 and again in 1925, Primo ordered Martínez Anido to collect the names of those state teachers (*maestros nacionales*) who had shown an extraordinary zeal at work.<sup>23</sup> Primary school inspectors nominated candidates for the rewards and the governmental delegates supervised and authorised the names proposed. Then the delegates handed the file to the civil governors who reported to Martínez Anido and General Navarro y Alonso de Celada, the Military Directory ‘minister’ of education.<sup>24</sup> What lay behind the idea of rewarding competent *maestros* was not only to gain teachers’ support for the regime, but actually to draw up a census of loyalist and opposition educators in Spain. These investigations on the “best” teachers were complemented with enquires about those

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<sup>19</sup> RO, 13-10-1925, *Colección Legislativa de Instrucción Pública* (hereafter CLIP), 1925, 569-571.

<sup>20</sup> RO 29-8-1924, CLIP, 1924, 533-534.

<sup>21</sup> Martínez Anido to civil governors, Circular letter, 7-12-1923; Primo de Rivera to delegates, 10-12-1923; Martínez Anido to delegates, Circular letter, 8-3-1925, AGA, Interior, Box 149.

<sup>22</sup> See dozens of letters and telegrams from teachers to Primo in AHN, Presidencia del Gobierno, Bundle 356, Box 1.

<sup>23</sup> See Martínez Anido to civil governors, 27-5-1924; Martínez Anido to Primo, Report on teachers, 13-11-1924; General Navarro to Martínez Anido, 11-22-1925, AHN, Gobernación, Serie A, Bundle 61, Box 3.

<sup>24</sup> See Martínez Anido to civil governors, 14-2-1925; Martínez Anido to civil governors of Alicante, Badajoz, Baleares, Burgos, Gerona, Granada, Logroño, Orense, Palencia, Santander, Teruel and Vizcaya, 27-2-1925; Martínez Anido to Primo de Rivera, 2-7-1925. AHN, Gobernación, Serie A, Bundle 61, Box 3.

*maestros* that were not following the *primorriverista* legislation. In many occasions, the reports sent to Madrid included sanctions imposed upon teachers.<sup>25</sup>

Purges of teachers from public and private schools were a constant throughout the dictatorship. Initially fuelled by accusations from the public, the delegates inspected schools and the civil governors sanctioned dozens of teachers from late 1923, on the grounds of recommending Unamuno's books, teaching liberal doctrines or refusing to gather pupils for the visit of the Bishop.<sup>26</sup> The formation of the Civil Directory did not lead to a lessening of the inquisitorial role of the delegates. In May 27, 1926, the General Director for Primary Education, Suárez Somonte, declared schools "must be nationalised" and threatened to shut down "every single one, whatever the type", in which children were not indoctrinated in Catholicism and love for Spain.<sup>27</sup> The new civilian team in charge of education really meant it. The day after Suárez's comments were published in the press, the Minister of Public Instruction, Eduardo Callejo, wrote to Martínez Anido inquiring whether the delegates were still legally entitled to inspect schools, and requested further involvement of the military in the persecution of *maestros* with "irregular behaviour".<sup>28</sup> The Interior Minister reassured Callejo and replied that the governors would keep on supervising and sanctioning teachers via delegates and inspectors to "correct those irregularities".<sup>29</sup> The record suggests that Martínez Anido was right and dozens of teachers were expelled, fined and removed from their posts for political reasons during the civil directory, while some others were rewarded for their loyalty to the regime.<sup>30</sup>

In the long term the military control imposed upon *maestros* had the same negative effects as the *primorriverista* persecution of other public employees. Teachers grew increasingly frustrated by the despotism of the delegates. In 1927, different groups of teachers wrote to Primo advocating a different and pedagogic model of inspection as

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<sup>25</sup> See, for example, General Navarro to Martínez Anido, 22-11-1925; Martínez Anido to the Civil Governor of Almería, 14-2-1925; Martínez Anido to the Civil Governor of Castellón, 14-2-1925; Civil Governor of Pontevedra to Martínez Anido, 16-2-1925. AHN, Gobernación, Serie A, Bundle 61, Box 3.

<sup>26</sup> Ben-Ami, *Fascism*, 105.

<sup>27</sup> López Martín, *Ideología (I)*, 35.

<sup>28</sup> Callejo to Martínez Anido, 29-5-1926, AGA, Interior, Box 149.

<sup>29</sup> Martínez Anido to Callejo, 4-6-1926, AGA, Interior, Box 149.

<sup>30</sup> See, for example, reports from the civil governors to Martínez Anido in AHN, Gobernación, Serie A, Bundle 61, Box 3; "Unión Ciudadana Anticaciquil de Villalba" to the General Director of Primary Education, 20-11-1927, AHN, Presidencia del Gobierno, Bundle 358; Primo de Rivera to Callejo, 9-1-1930, AHN, Presidencia del Gobierno, Bundle 114, Box 2.

opposed to the repressive one established by the dictatorship.<sup>31</sup> In some exceptional instances, the actions of the delegates led to outbursts of violence. In the town of Moya (Las Palmas), for example, the father of a sanctioned teacher tried to kill the local *delegado* by stabbing him in the neck.<sup>32</sup> When the dictatorship fell in 1930, teachers denounced in the press the repression they had suffered under Primo and demanded an amnesty for some of their colleagues, arguing that the *primorriverista* system did not seek to correct the faults of those expelled, but merely to get rid of those politically problematic for the regime.<sup>33</sup>

Scrutinizing the teachers' message also required controlling primary school inspectors. The regime almost immediately realised school inspectors' potential to supplement the delegates' work. Inspectors were granted the power to close down public and private schools where doctrines against the unity of the fatherland or against religion were taught. They could also close down schools if they found teachers teaching in languages other than Castilian. Should they find any opposition from the headmaster or teachers, the inspector had to inform the civil governor, who would enforce the sanction.<sup>34</sup> In the Royal Decree of 13 October 1925 inspectors and school directors were again ordered to be on the alert for cases in which anti-social ideas or doctrines against the unity of the patria could be exposed. In those cases with "enough circumstantial evidence" (*indicios suficientes de culpabilidad*), teachers could be suspended straight away.<sup>35</sup> The government insisted inspectors had to thoroughly examine text books and students to find out whether anti-patriotic or anti-social ideas had been taught.<sup>36</sup> What is more, inspectors had to inquire about teachers' behaviour outside the school. They should investigate how *maestros* conducted themselves in town and whether they spread anti-patriotic ideas among the locals.<sup>37</sup> This effectively turned school inspectors into spies at the service of the regime. Once more, the *primorriverista* dictatorship blurred the frontiers between public and private spheres in the name of protecting the fatherland, while attempting to build the surveillance machinery of a totalitarian state.

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<sup>31</sup> See various letters from teachers to Primo, December 1927, in AHN, Presidencia del Gobierno, Bundle 358.

<sup>32</sup> For the assassination attempt see civil governor of Las Palmas to Martínez Anido, 19-2-1929, AHN, Gobernación, Serie A, Bundle 17A, Box 2.

<sup>33</sup> *El Magisterio Español*, 14-5-1930.

<sup>34</sup> RO 12-2-1924, *CLIP*, 1924, 84-85.

<sup>35</sup> Art. 1, RO 13-10-1925, *CLIP*, 1925, 569-571.

<sup>36</sup> These examinations and sanctions applied equally to private schools. Art. 2, 3 and 4, RO 13-10-1925.

<sup>37</sup> Art. 5, RO 13-10-1925.

As *de facto* assistants to the delegates, inspectors also played an active part in the propaganda machine, organising patriotic conferences and establishing cultural associations.<sup>38</sup> However, it was the inspectors' repressive role that had a deeper impact on the *primorriverista* educational system. The wave of expectations that the Military Directory initially created led many ordinary citizens and public officers to send confidential accusations denouncing teachers to the military government. In the first three months of the dictatorship, hundreds of teachers were accused of diverse irregularities – from repeated absenteeism to running illegal businesses selling school materials in class. Trying to cope with the situation, General Luis Navarro quickly reacted by sending inspectors to investigate the claims, usually within less than ten days.<sup>39</sup> By early December 1923, the cascade of accusations was such that the government issued a Royal Order attempting to harmonise the investigations.<sup>40</sup> The inspectors found themselves with the huge task of running hundreds of 'criminal' investigations against teachers. The latter, quite correctly, saw the inspectors as repressive bureaucrats and governmental spies and soon showed strong disaffection for them. In every single annual meeting of the *Asociación Nacional del Magisterio* throughout the dictatorship, teachers demanded the inspection task should be carried out by *maestros* and not by 'functionaries'.<sup>41</sup>

Not that the impact of the *primorriverista* system was any better among the inspectors themselves. Military control and the inquisitorial tasks imposed upon the inspectors increasingly led to the complete politicization of the corps. As a *cuerpo de funcionarios* the inspectors lost their autonomy and became subordinate to the *delegados* and civil governors. The fact that the delegates were ordered to perform the same job as the inspectors also infuriated the latter, who steadily and unsuccessfully protested against military meddling.<sup>42</sup> The regime reacted to these demands of professional independence by further tightening the state control over the inspectors. In

<sup>38</sup> See, for instance, Civil Governor of Ciudad Real to Presidencia del Gobierno, 12-7-1928, AHN, Presidencia del Gobierno, Bundle 358; Civil Governor of Álava to Martínez Anido, 26-2-1926; Civil Governor of Santander to Martínez Anido, 8-3-1926, AHN, Gobernación Serie A, Bundle 61, Box 3.

<sup>39</sup> For accusations between September and December, 1923, see AHN, Presidencia del Gobierno, Bundle 101, Files 1 to 460. More accusations for the period 1924-1930 in AHN, Presidencia del Gobierno, Bundle, 217, Box 1; and AHN, Presidencia del Gobierno, Bundle 358.

<sup>40</sup> RO 13-12-1923, *CLIP*, 1923, 511. Functionaries were warned that they would be punished should they present false claims. As with local political leaders, it seems that many people took the fall of the Restoration regime to carry out personal vendettas against teachers.

<sup>41</sup> López Martín, Ramón, "La Inspección de la Enseñanza Primaria en la Dictadura de Primo de Rivera", in *Historia de la Educación*, n. 6, (1987), 316-317.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, 319-320.



October 1926, the government granted the Ministry of Public Instruction with the power to transfer inspectors to different posts around the country. This flagrantly violated the principle of immobility of inspectors established in 1913, which only infuriated the inspectors further.<sup>43</sup> Additionally, Primo and Martínez Anido reassured the delegates in their 'educational mission' and insisted they should keep educators under close observation.<sup>44</sup>

These measures, in fact, complemented rather more surreptitious governmental manoeuvres. In June 1926, Martínez Anido set up an intelligence network to spy on inspectors. In a confidential letter, he instructed all civil governors to secretly gather information about "the political moral and social milieu" in which the inspectors worked and lived. Martínez Anido commanded the delegates should watch the inspectors closely and report their political affinity to the governors. The governors in turn should report to the General Director of Primary Education for possible sanctions.<sup>45</sup> The following week, the first confidential intelligence reached the Ministry of Public Instruction. The governors' reports were political files on every single inspector in Spain, detailing their activities outside the schools and their degree of loyalty to the dictatorship.<sup>46</sup> Many inspectors not fulfilling their 'patriotic duties' were removed from their posts, especially in Catalonia where the *primorriveristas* launched a 'crusade' against the use of Catalan in primary schools.<sup>47</sup>

The *primorriverista* military-run surveillance system of schools proved to have unintended consequences. As in many other areas, the work of the military delegates led to a backlash by civilian professionals who grew increasingly hostile to the dictatorship. The regime's reaction to this discontent, tightening state control and purging the *cuerpo*, only made things worst. Once the dictatorship had fallen, the inspectors themselves publicly complained about the political policing the dictatorship had forced them to undertake and called for a complete rearrangement of the corps and the recovery of their pedagogic task.<sup>48</sup> The *primorriverista* system alienated inspectors from the regime and

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<sup>43</sup> For the inspectors' dissatisfaction with the RD 22-10-1926 see *El Magisterio Español*, 20-11-1926.

<sup>44</sup> See Martínez Anido to civil governors, 27-1-1926 in AGA, Interior, Box 149; and RO 28-12-1927, in *La Gaceta*, 29-12-1927.

<sup>45</sup> Martínez Anido to civil governors, "Circular Confidencial y Reservada", 24-6-1926, AHN, Gobernación Serie A, Bundle 61, Box 3.

<sup>46</sup> On some occasions the civil governors sent copies of their reports to Martínez Anido. See Civil Governor of Coruña to Director General of Primary Education, 3-7-1926; Civil Governor of Murcia to Martínez Anido, no date; Civil Governor of Zaragoza to Martínez Anido 1-7-1926. AHN, Gobernación Serie A, Bundle 61, Box 3.

<sup>47</sup> López Martín, "La Inspección", 321.

<sup>48</sup> *El Magisterio Español*, 19-4-1930; *El Magisterio Español*, 18-6-1930.

the *maestros* from the inspectors. A key element in the chain of ideological control in the educational system, the inspection of schools, was broken by the *primorriveristas*.

## PATRIOTIC BOOKS AND CEREMONIES

Intensive governmental activities in banning books and repressing ideas were not initially matched with serious changes in the primary education curriculum. The regime, however, was keen in selecting the ‘appropriate’ Spanish history texts and elaborated lists of books to be bought by public schools and libraries.<sup>49</sup> The dictatorship drew upon a range of nationalist texts for children written for the ‘Book of the Patria’ award. Created by the Maurist Minister of Education, Cesar Silió, in 1921, this prize aimed to stir patriotic feelings and promote ‘civic virtues’ among children. Although the jury failed to choose a winner in 1922, many of the 63 works presented were later published and included in the official reading lists during the dictatorship.<sup>50</sup> The *primorriveristas* chose to grant official status to those works that portrayed the imperial glories and Catholicism as the hallmarks of Spanish history, while at the same time emphasising the idea of the ‘fatherland in danger’. It is important to notice here that a common feature of these books was the continuous appeal to national vanity coupled with the use of a passionate and stirring language. This was a patriotic education understood not as intellectual education, but as emotional learning and, hence, its obsessive resort to the idea of the ‘endangered patria’ and its continuous emotional appeal to ‘feel the greatness of the fatherland’. Hence, too, the essential role of teachers in this emotional pedagogic technique, which required a total and fervent commitment from the *maestros* in order to make a decisive impact on the young audience.<sup>51</sup>

*Primorriverista* educational policies undoubtedly provided the adequate ground for an editorial boom of patriotic schoolbooks. Some of the works presented to the ‘Book of the Patria’ award were directly backed by the regime’s ideologues, such as Adolfo Villanueva’s *Patria y Hogar*, a book for which Pemán wrote the prologue.<sup>52</sup> Some others became bestsellers, as was the case of Manuel Siurot’s *La emoción de España*, a book modelled on the French patriotic reader, *Le tour de France par deux*

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<sup>49</sup> Del Pozo and Braster, “The Rebirth”, 89.

<sup>50</sup> Alberto del Pozo Pardo, “El Libro de la Patria’, Un concurso escolar vacío, de matiz regeneracionista (1921-1923)”, in J. Ruiz Berrio (ed.), *La educación en la España contemporánea* [Madrid: 1985], 195-202.

<sup>51</sup> María del Mar del Pozo Andrés, *Curriculum e identidad nacional* [Madrid: 2000], 241.

<sup>52</sup> Adolfo Villanueva, *Patria y Hogar* [Burgos: 1927].

*enfants*.<sup>53</sup> Moreover, the *primorriverista* campaign launched in 1926 to produce patriotic books did nothing but increase the number of works published aiming at fortifying national identity among children.<sup>54</sup> Simultaneously, the government made sure that the editorial boom matched public demand. It included these new titles in the officially 'recommended books' for the *escuelas nacionales*, delivered them to schools and public libraries and gave them out to the inspectors and teachers involved in the organisation of patriotic conferences in rural areas. A sort of history book that had had a good market during the Restoration now found the market expanded by state intervention.

Although the commercial success of these works certainly pleased the dictatorship, the *primorriveristas* sought more state control over school-texts. As early as November 1923, Primo ordered the Royal Council of Public Instruction to produce a report on the establishment of a single text in primary and secondary education. However, clashes between the regime and the liberal-controlled Royal Council of Public Instruction seem to have precluded the production of the report. In 1926, the regime purged the Council, filled it with *primorriverista* loyalists, and ignored the institution hereafter.<sup>55</sup> Yet the government was determined to have a single text for primary education and ordered the Royal Academy of History to prepare a graded series of history texts for mandatory use in the country's public schools. The Royal Academy of History asked the former director of the Centre of Historical Studies, Rafael Altamira to create the series.<sup>56</sup> A liberal fully committed to the promotion Spanish patriotism via history books, Altamira wrote the first manual of the series. Interestingly, the book presented the Habsburg rule as the Spanish golden age and, much in line with the *primorriverista* discourse, emphasised the recently "renewed prestige of Spaniards" in

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<sup>53</sup> Manuel Siurot Rodríguez, *La emoción de España* [Madrid: 1924]. By 1927 the book had reached its third edition.

<sup>54</sup> Among those children's 'patriotic books' published during the dictatorship were Virgilio Hueso, *Nociones de Historia de España* [Madrid: 1923]; Alfredo Gil Muñiz, *Hispania Mater*, 3 vol. [Burgos: 1923-1930]; Julio Cejador y Fracua, *Tierra y Alma Española* [Madrid: 1924]; Gabriel Vergara, *Nociones de Historia de España* [Madrid: 1927]; C. Suárez (Españolito), *Rafael. Novela para muchachos* [Madrid: 1926]; Pascual Santacruz, *España sobre todo* [Madrid: 1926]; Ezequiel Solana, *La Patria Española*; Manuel Siurot Rodríguez, *La emoción de España*; Martínez Muñoz, *Una escuela de la Patria*; Juan Ruiz Romero, *La Raza* [Barcelona: 1926]; G. Vítores Fernández, *Cartilla para la instrucción cívico-patriótica de los niños* [Guadalajara: 1927]; idem, *Manual Cívico-Patriótico para los niños y adultos* [Guadalajara: 1928]; Gerardo Rodríguez, *Historia de España* [Madrid: 1928]; José Xandri Pich, *Del solar hispano: (notas geográficas e históricas, costumbres y folklore)* [Palencia: n. d.]; Gabino Enciso Villanueva, *Mi patria: Lo que ha sido, lo que es y lo que puede llegar a ser* [Burgos: 1929, 1 ed. 1920].

<sup>55</sup> For the reform of the Council see RD 25-6-1926. After the reform the Council was not consulted in major educational reforms.

<sup>56</sup> Boyd, *Historia*, 160, 190.

the international arena and the hope the nation would “as important in the world as it was from the times of the Catholic Kings to the mid-seventeenth century”.<sup>57</sup> However, Altamira’s work was not published until 1930. Berenguer’s government granted the text official status on March that year and it became mandatory in all public schools.<sup>58</sup> Liberal teachers welcomed the book, while the Catholic Right criticized it.<sup>59</sup> For the *primorriveristas* it was all too late. By the time the book was in the schools, Primo had been forced to resign.

If the regime’s attempt to produce a single history text can only be considered in terms of failure, the dictatorship did much better when it came to promoting patriotic ceremonies. Whether introduced in the curriculum or considered as extra-curricular activities, the *primorriveristas* gave a great importance to the commemoration of so-called ‘patriotic events’. Anniversaries of Primo’s coup, the Day of the Spanish Race and the Feast of the Somatén flag sanctification became school festivals in which children were lectured on the nation, the regime and its leader. More often than not, these commemorations also included a ceremony in which the national flag was blessed while students sang patriotic hymns.<sup>60</sup> In this manner, students were encouraged to internalise images of national identity in an atmosphere of patriotic communion specifically created to excite the feelings of the youngsters. For example, after the first transatlantic aerial crossing from Spain to South America in 1926 by Spanish pilots, the state ordered public schools to explain the event in geography class.<sup>61</sup> The idea behind the teaching of such an event was twofold. First, the authorities attempted to combat the inferiority complex that, according to them, some progressive regenerationist views had created among the masses. The flight of the *Plus Ultra*, the official press stated, was evidence of the fact that Spain was no backward country and could achieve great modern “deeds”. Second, the crossing was portrayed as a contemporary Columbus’ voyage, therefore, underlining the *Hispanista* vision of the dictatorship. In an

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<sup>57</sup> Real Academia de la Historia [Rafael Altamira], *Historia de España, para uso de las escuelas primarias* [Madrid: 1930], 61.

<sup>58</sup> RO 16-4-1930, *Gaceta*, 23-4-1930.

<sup>59</sup> For the liberals see *El Magisterio Nacional*, 6-5-1930. For the Catholic Right, *Atenas*, 15-3-1931, 273-274.

<sup>60</sup> Some examples of these ceremonies in public and private schools in Delegate of Alpetá to Presidencia, 2-5-1924; Delegate of La Roda to Presidencia, 2-5-1924, Delegate of Concentaina to Presidencia, 17-10-1924, AHN, Presidencia, Bundle 133, Box 1; Delegate of La Roda to Martínez Anido, 21-5-1924, AHN, Presidencia, Bundle 331, Box 1; Civil Governor of Granada to Primo de Rivera, 20-3-1926; Presidencia del Consejo de Ministros report, 21-6-1926; Civil Governor of Coruña to Ministerio de Gobernación, 2-9-1926, AHN, Presidencia del Gobierno, Bundle 358. See also *El Magisterio Español*, 10-10-1928; *La Vanguardia*, 13-10-1923; *El Noticiero Universal*, 12-10-1928.

atmosphere of nationalist exaltation, the record suggests that teachers not only explained the aviators' adventure in class, but many schools organised public homages to the "heroes of the *Plus Ultra*".<sup>62</sup>

The regime was also keen on of inventing and re-inventing traditions. The official establishment of the Day of the Spanish Book (*Fiesta del Libro*) was unquestionably the *primorrriveristas*' greatest success. Created by the Royal Decree of 6 February 1926, the fiesta was to be celebrated in all educational institutions on 7 October, the anniversary of the birth of Cervantes. The government was completely resolved to direct the festivity and carefully instructed primary and secondary schools, universities, polytechnics and professional colleges on how they had to observe the event. Every educational institution in the country was legally obliged "to commemorate the Day of the Spanish Book with solemn public events, dedicated to praise and popularise national publications and the culture of the fatherland".<sup>63</sup> Primary schools should devote "at least, one hour to explain to students the importance of books as instruments of culture, civilization and [spiritual] richness".<sup>64</sup> To make sure the celebrations took place in the manner the government had planned, three weeks before the first Day of the Spanish Book, Martínez Anido mobilised civil governors and delegates for the occasion.<sup>65</sup> The Minister of Interior ordered all *diputaciones provinciales* and municipalities to cooperate with the celebration and organise public lectures in the high schools. In addition, all public corporations had to assign a certain percentage of their budget to buy books to be donated to poor children and "popular" (public) libraries had to be built in every Spanish province.<sup>66</sup>

Behind the promotion of libraries and the donation of books lay the regenerationist idea of educating the masses in patriotic values as a way to build a strong national identity.<sup>67</sup> But the *Fiesta del Libro* had further implications. Above all, it was a vindication of the Castilian language. Restoration liberal governments had promoted Castilian as the national language in public schools and turned Don Quixote into a national emblem. In 1912 and again in 1920, the educational authorities ordered

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<sup>61</sup> RO 3-2-1926, *BOMIP*, 9-2-1926.

<sup>62</sup> See tens of teachers' reports in AHN, Presidencia del Gobierno, Bundle 358.

<sup>63</sup> RD 6-2-1926, *Gaceta* 9-2-1926.

<sup>64</sup> RO 17-9-1926, in *El Magisterio Español*, 21-9-1926, 754.

<sup>65</sup> Martínez Anido to all Civil Governors, 20-9-1926, AHN, Gobernación Serie A, Bundle 61, Box 3.

<sup>66</sup> RO 17-9-1926, in *El Magisterio Español*, 28-9-1926, 833-834. Further legislation insisting on the donations was issued two years later, RO 24-9-1928, in *El Magisterio Español*, 1-10-1928, 14.

<sup>67</sup> For a contemporary interpretation of the *Fiesta del Libro* as a means to improve the "integral health of the race" see José Martos Peinado in *El Magisterio Español*, 1-10-1928, 1-4.

the mandatory reading of Don Quixote in public schools on a daily basis. The *primorriverista* establishment of the *Fiesta del Libro* was the heyday of the linguistic policies of school Spanishization. It was also the National-Catholic response to similar celebrations peripheral nationalists and regionalists held, such as the Day of the Catalan Language. It was no coincidence, then, that Primo's government made significant efforts for the promotion of the *Fiesta del Libro* in Catalonia.<sup>68</sup> At the same time, the regime's ideologues were always eager to stress the universal character of Castilian language, linking it to their *Hispanista* policies and the revival of Spanish imperialism.<sup>69</sup> The figure of Cervantes, himself a soldier who had participated in the battle of Lepanto, was a permanent reminder of the sixteenth century Spanish imperial glories.<sup>70</sup>

According to the conservative press, the celebration of the *Fiesta del Libro* was an important achievement for the Dictatorship.<sup>71</sup> In Santander, for example, three new libraries were opened in the province to commemorate Cervantes on 7 October 1926. In addition, school trips were organised to the library of Menéndez Pelayo. Once there, children were lectured on the historian's life and said a prayer for the soul of the traditionalist thinker, the honour of the nation and the Spanish book in front of the statue of Menéndez Pelayo.<sup>72</sup> One of the reasons for this success lay in the teachers' support for the celebration. Teachers welcomed the initiative from the very first day and took an active role in the celebrations. *El Magisterio Español* praised the Fiesta as follows: "[This is] one of the government's best ideas. And, it has not been just an initiative, like many others that are later forgotten, but [the government] has made its best since the very first day and has mobilised all possible elements for the Fiesta to produce positive results."<sup>73</sup> Martínez Anido's network turned out to be highly effective in mobilising teachers.

Nevertheless, for all the *primorriverista* use of the state apparatus, the success of the *Fiesta del Libro* in terms of mass mobilisation should not be exaggerated. According to Gómez Baquero, a liberal educationalist, the general public scarcely attended the events organised in schools and academies nor did bookshops increase

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<sup>68</sup> For the implementation of the Fiesta del Libro in Catalonia see below, 'The Spanishization of Catalonia'.

<sup>69</sup> For the promotion of Castilian and the *Hispanista* policies of the UP ideologues see chapter 3.

<sup>70</sup> M. Cluyle, "Don Quijote en Flandes", *Revista de Segunda Enseñanza*, December 1926, 383-385.

<sup>71</sup> *ABC*, 9-10-1928; *El Magisterio Español*, 12-10-1929.

<sup>72</sup> *Unión Patriótica*, 1-11-1926, 24.

<sup>73</sup> *El Magisterio Español*, 7-10-1926, 67-68.

their sales during the 1927 celebrations. In his view, the main problem was that the regime had put too much stress on public rites to commemorate the *Fiesta del Libro*, but these were newly created artificial ceremonies and the public did not respond. “The *Fiesta del Libro* began imposing a liturgy and two years later it is already old, wasted, decrepit”, he concluded.<sup>74</sup>

Not all patriotic ceremonies in the schools were recent *primorriverista* inventions. In some cases, the regime revitalized old rituals and transformed them into new National Catholic ceremonies. First celebrated in the 1890s, the Day of the Tree (*Fiesta del Árbol*) was a salutation of nature and the fatherland, in which school children planted trees and teachers gave patriotic discourses. Planting trees symbolised the growth of the locality as part of the regeneration of the whole nation. For many conservative regionalists, the *Fiesta del Árbol* became the main exponent of how the “little patria” could regenerate the “larger patria” and the ceremonies spread throughout Spain in the first decade of the twentieth century. In 1904 the *Fiesta del Árbol* was officially established and in 1915 it was declared a mandatory celebration in all national schools. However, the ‘officialisation’ of the fiesta signalled its decline since many municipalities saw it as a centralist imposition from Madrid. By the early 1920s, the Day of the Tree was in clear decay.<sup>75</sup>

Primo decided to revive the ritual as a means of patriotic child indoctrination. The original conservative regionalist message of promoting the “little patria” had to be modified, for it antagonised the *primorriverista* unitarian concept of Spain. Unsurprisingly, the regime called upon the *delegados* to modify the message.<sup>76</sup> Since the very beginning of the dictatorship, they organised the Day of the Tree in their districts as part of their general task of promoting patriotic feelings among the population.<sup>77</sup> The delegates organised the fiesta in the same manner as other patriotic rituals: they assembled the local authorities, hoisted and blessed the national flag and gave patriotic speeches. The teachers were also invited to utter some patriotic words and children read poems and sang nationalist songs composed for the event. On many occasions, the local priest recited a public mass, sanctifying the flag and the trees as the symbolic and organic representations of the patria. In this ‘patriotic communion’, the *delegados* certainly fulfilled their role of ‘apostles of the fatherland’, while teachers

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<sup>74</sup> *El Sol*, 12-10-1927.

<sup>75</sup> Del Pozo, *Curriculum*, 219-224.

<sup>76</sup> Martínez Anido to delegates, 8-3-1925, AGA, Interior, Box 149.

became the 'priests of the nation' addressing their young 'flock'. As with the *primorriverista* ceremonies for soldiers, Catholic imagery and rhetoric were integrated into civic patriotic rituals in schools. Like all the other National-Catholic ceremonies, this integration was in terms of subordination to the supreme deity: the nation.

It is beyond question that the regime saw schools as the most important vehicle for the transmission and consolidation of nationalist images, symbols and discourses. Whether drawing upon liberal icons (Don Quixote) or conservative rituals (the Day of the Tree), the *primorriveristas* transformed messages and rituals of the Restoration and turned them into specific National Catholic celebrations. Control from the Interior Ministry and the use of *delegados* also homogenised *primorriverista* patriotic and civic rituals in terms of ceremony and discourse. In these celebrations of the nation, the school became the church of the fatherland and the commemoration of civic saints, like Cervantes, was entrusted to teachers in their role as lay priests.<sup>78</sup> However, the effective transmission of National Catholicism as a civic religion in the school needed something more than patriotic lectures and rituals. Improving the material conditions of schools and teachers became indispensable for the success of the indoctrination policies of the regime.

## STRUCTURAL REFORMS: SCHOOLS AND TEACHERS

The dictatorship adopted the battle against illiteracy as one of its main educational priorities. Like the regenerationists, the *primorriveristas* considered the high number of illiterates in Spain as a symptom of the country's backwardness, and accused the *caciques* of deliberately keeping the masses ignorant so the local elites could maintain their political power.<sup>79</sup> Since the beginning of the dictatorship, Primo directed the delegates to create cultural associations, which would provide reading classes in towns and villages.<sup>80</sup> He also demanded public cooperation in this task, especially from teachers and priests, and mobilised the UP militants for the organisation of 'anti-illiteracy campaigns'.<sup>81</sup> Although these measures may have had some sort of temporary effect and certainly scored a propaganda victory for the government, they

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<sup>77</sup> Dozens of reports from the delegates in AHN, Presidencia, Bundles Bundle 358 and 331, Box 1.

<sup>78</sup> For a description of the school as the church of the patria in where kids worship "Saint Cervantes" and the *maestro* are the priests of the fatherland, see Rafael Pérez Pérez in *El Magisterio Español*, 3-10-1928, 35-36.

<sup>79</sup> Díaz Retg, *España*, 54; Pemartín, *Los valores*, 422.

<sup>80</sup> RD 20-10-1923, *Gaceta*, 21-10-1923.



could not solve the problem of illiteracy in Spain. As Primo's much-admired Joaquín Costa had noticed at the turn of the century, only by tackling the chronic shortage of schools and improving the salaries of teachers could illiteracy rates go down the long term.

The regime was fully aware of the need to promote the construction of new schools and in November 1923 legislated facilitating credits to the municipalities with this specific aim in mind.<sup>82</sup> In April 1924, the government created the Junta for the Promotion of Public Schools, an agency in charge of coordinating state funds for school constructions, and, seven months later, more credits were given to the municipalities for building schools.<sup>83</sup> What all this legislation shows is that the regime advanced towards extensive state intervention in public education, reinforcing the role of the central government in terms of financial and legal control to the detriment of the municipalities. In other words, the dictatorship furthered the process of nationalisation of public education (i.e. bringing schools under the direct control of the central state). This process soon paid off in terms of the number of new schools constructed. In the last three months of 1923, 78 new schools were built. Throughout 1924, 652 schools were inaugurated and this figure had risen to 857 by 1925.<sup>84</sup>

For the *primorriverista* team in charge of education during the Civil Directory school building became a major task not only for improving the appalling pedagogic conditions of the country, but also in terms of political propaganda. For a technocratic dictatorship building schools was seen as a material justification of the regime and a way to gain popular support. In 1926, Suárez Somonte stated that increasing the number of schools was the number one objective. The reason was simple:

“[Of all works of the dictatorship] the one that has rose the people's enthusiasm most [...] has been the increase in the number of teachers with 2.500 schools created

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<sup>81</sup> The mobilisation of the UP against illiteracy in *La Nación*, 3-11-1925. For the cooperation of *maestros* and priests see RO 28-12-1927, *Gaceta* 29-12-1929.

<sup>82</sup> RO 2-11-1923, CLIP, 1923, 447-450.

<sup>83</sup> RO 12-4-1924, CLIP, 1924, 245-246; RO 24-11-1924.

<sup>84</sup> López Martín, *Ideología (I)*, 105. There are important discrepancies over the number of schools inaugurated during the dictatorship. The highest figures are in Samaniego Moniego's *La política educativa en la Segunda República* [Madrid: 1977], 218, with 8,909 schools and Ben-Ami's *Fascism*, 286, with 8,000 schools. Díaz de la Guardia lowers the figure to 6,636 in “La enseñanza con Primo de Rivera”, *Historia* 16, n. 71, 21. Rial in *Revolution*, 216, gives a figure of 5,979 and López Martín in *Ideología (I)*, 106, calculates in 4,506 the number of new schools created.

and the intensification of school constructions. Every school created or built in whatever locality is a town gained for the regime.”<sup>85</sup>

Suárez Somonte might have been under the illusion that building schools in a locality was tantamount to gaining its political support, but there can be no doubt that the regime took advantage of the constructions to promote itself. The governmental delegates turned every single opening of a new school into a nationalist ceremony. In the purest *primorriverista* style, they gathered the population, delivered patriotic speeches, and sanctified the national flag. As in the case of the *Fiesta del Árbol*, *maestros* were also invited to utter some patriotic words for the occasion and children sang nationalist anthems. Almost invariably the new schools were named after Primo de Rivera.<sup>86</sup>

By 1926 the regime was seriously behind schedule in constructing the schools it had promised. Somonte calculated 2000 new *escuelas* had to be built in 1927 simply to catch up with the government’s original plans.<sup>87</sup> He presented a proposal for accelerating the number of school-building projects that included a series of measures all which called for a further state funding of the educational system. The Director General for Primary Education realised that the current legislation favoured urban centres in terms of state subsidies and proposed the state should pay for 50% of the cost of schools in villages and small towns. Moreover, for extremely poor localities the Director General for Primary Education intended the central government to take full responsibility for funding schools, since these municipalities “needed a more energetic, efficient and complete state protection, imposed by force”.<sup>88</sup> Suárez Somonte’s plans were to partially find legal expression in 1927 when the Section of School Constructions (*Sección de Construcciones Escolares*) was created in the Department of Primary Education to coordinate school building.<sup>89</sup> The following year, a Royal Decree facilitated state direct funding to the poorest municipalities and established a Committee for School Constructions (*Comisión de Construcciones Escolares*) in every Spanish

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<sup>85</sup> Suárez Somonte, “Notas para el presupuesto de 1ª enseñanza en 1927”, AHN, Presidencia del Gobierno, Bundle 358.

<sup>86</sup> Dozens of reports on the opening school ceremonies in AHN, Presidencia del Gobierno, Bundle 358.

<sup>87</sup> “Notas para el presupuesto de 1ª enseñanza en 1927”, AHN, Presidencia del Gobierno, Bundle 358.

<sup>88</sup> Suárez Somonte, “Proyecto de Real Decreto para la creación de Escuelas” and Suárez Somonte to Primo de Rivera, 4-12-1926, AHN, Presidencia del Gobierno, Bundle 358.

<sup>89</sup> RD 12-12-1927.

province, in order to evaluate their diverse material necessities.<sup>90</sup> More importantly, Suárez Somonte's project found monetary backing in the "special budget" (*presupuesto extraordinario*) issued by the dictatorship in 1926. This allowed the Ministry of Public Instruction to heavily invest in school buildings. Thus, the state spent 9 million pesetas in school constructions in 1927, 12 million in 1928 and 14.5 million in 1929, a rather substantial increase when considering that in 1920 the central government had spent just 1.5 million in building schools.<sup>91</sup>

Although this injection of money led to an important increase in the number of *escuelas* built, it far from solved the problem of the schools shortage in Spain. In 1927, out of the 2,000 schools needed according to Suárez Somonte, only 950 materialised. The shortfall infuriated *maestros* who bitterly complained about the broken promises and the fact that the regime had decided to reduce the target of schools to be built the following year.<sup>92</sup> In effect, things just worsened from then onwards. In 1928, only 671 new *escuelas* were inaugurated, beginning a serious downswing in the number of schools constructed. By 1929, the numbers had plummeted to 562.<sup>93</sup> Although initially the *primorriverista* propaganda machine could have deceived some sectors of the public, it did not mislead teachers, who insisted on the necessity of increasing the number of schools and improving the budget for their maintenance.<sup>94</sup> After the fall of the dictatorship, *El Magisterio Nacional*, alarmed after Berenguer had announced a cut in the public instruction budget, angrily grumbled:

"... the Spanish state has to spend more on primary education. People were led to believe that *Maestros* were well paid and that is not true. [The *primorriveristas*] repeated so often that thousands of schools were being created, that many think that need is fulfilled already, and this is not the case..."<sup>95</sup>

Why did teachers consider *primorriverista* investment insufficient? After all, the regime expanded the number of *escuelas nacionales* from 27,080 in late 1923 to 33,446

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<sup>90</sup> RD 10-7-1928.

<sup>91</sup> Ramón López Martín, "La construcción y creación de escuelas en la España del primer tercio del siglo XX", *Historia de la Educación*, n. 16, 1997, 72, f.n. 19.

<sup>92</sup> *El Magisterio Español*, 31-12-1927.

<sup>93</sup> López Martín, *Ideología (I)*, 105

<sup>94</sup> *El Socialista*, 27-11-1929.

<sup>95</sup> *El Magisterio Español*, 30-4-1930.

at the end of 1930.<sup>96</sup> Yet it is important to note that this 23.5% increase in the number of schools could not have had a decisive impact on improving the ratio of schools to students, since, as a result of the demographic boom of the 1910s, the number of children attending primary school grew an impressive 22.9% during the period 1924-1930.<sup>97</sup> By 1932-33, only 51.2% of school-age children were in fact on a school roll.<sup>98</sup> In other words, for all the *primorriveristas*' efforts, the construction of schools during the dictatorship merely palliated the pressures imposed upon the educational system by the country's demographic growth. Paradoxically, the upgrading of the educational system in the 1920s, which was itself a response to the process of socio-economic modernization of Spain in the first two decades of the twentieth century, fell victim to the demographic growth produced by that very process of socio-economic development.

Increasing the number of teachers and improving their material conditions and preparation was a necessary complement to the *primorriverista* quantitative structural reform of primary education. During the Military Directory, the regime promoted the creation of new primary teacher posts in an attempt to match the intended growth of new schools. As early as November 1923, the government identified the need to "create new *Maestros* and *Maestras* posts for primary schools", to be paid for by the state.<sup>99</sup> Thus, the state created 1500 new posts in 1924 and 1000 more in 1925, an increase of 8.64% in the total number of *maestros nacionales*.<sup>100</sup> Following the same pattern of nationalisation of the educational system applied to the construction of schools, the dictatorship committed the central government to funding teachers.

During the Civil Directory, however, the creation of teaching jobs soon slowed down and by the end of 1926 the number of new *maestros* had plummeted to 300.<sup>101</sup> The decrease was mainly due to a reduction in the 1926 Public Instruction budget and the chaotic situation produced in the allocation of those teaching posts created in 1924 and 1925. Suárez Somonte was fully aware of the need to seriously increase the number

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<sup>96</sup> For the data on the number of schools see Instituto Nacional de Estadística, *Principales actividades de la vida española en la primera mitad del siglo XX* [Madrid: 1952], 163.

<sup>97</sup> In 1913 the Spanish population was 20,302,000 inhabitants. By 1923 it has gone up to 21,639,000. In 1924 the number of students in escuelas nacionales was 1,691,331. By 1930 it was 2,078,696. *Anuario Estadístico de España 1930*, xxiv.

<sup>98</sup> Christopher Cobb, "The Republican State and Mass Educational-Cultural Initiatives, 1931-1936", in Helen Graham and Jo Labanyi (eds.), *Spanish Cultural Studies*, 135.

<sup>99</sup> RD 2-11-1923, *CLIP*, 1923, 447-450.

<sup>100</sup> In 1922-1923, the number of *maestros* was 28,924. See *Anuario Estadístico de España 1930* [Madrid: 1932], 619. For the creation of teaching posts in 1924 and 1925 see RO 28-1-1924, *CLIP*, 1923, 50-52; RO 8-8-1924, *CLIP*, 1924, 509-512; RO 7-7-1925, *CLIP*, 1925, 371-372.

<sup>101</sup> RO 21-7-1926.

of teachers if he was to, first, modernise the educational system and, second, gain support from the educators. In his report on the 1927 education budget, the Director General for Primary Education stated Spain was in a dramatic situation with only 1.50 teacher per 1000 inhabitants, whereas France had 3.05 per 1000 inhabitants; Italy 2.30; and Germany 4.32. He concluded that to catch up with Europe, “we need 23,000 *maestros* more, so there would be one teacher every 60 children”.<sup>102</sup>

Suárez Somonte’s recommendations seem to have had an immediate effect and, in 1927, the state created 1500 new teaching posts. The following year, 700 men and women became *maestros nacionales*, 1000 more teaching posts were created in 1929, and plans to generate 1000 new posts in 1930 were achieved.<sup>103</sup> All together, the number of *maestros nacionales* grew from 28,924 in 1922 to 34,680 at the end of 1930, a 19.90% increase.<sup>104</sup> Yet the fact that the government legislated the creation of teaching posts did not necessarily mean that all those new *maestros* actually ended up teaching. The public competitions by which *maestro* posts were allocated were chaotic. In the 1923 and 1925 public competitions, hundreds of candidates who had passed their exams had to wait months, if not years, until they were assigned a school, while some others were never given a post. As a result of this incompetent organization of public competitions, *El Magisterio Español* denounced in late 1927 that Spain had “thousands of vacant schools without *Maestro*, and thousands of *Maestros* without school”.<sup>105</sup> When the regime regulated the public competition system in 1928, it established a two-year interim period before a maestro was finally assigned to a school and a very complicated system of examination, which led to further confusion and irregularities.<sup>106</sup> Consequently, the number of teachers without a school increased, as did the outrage of candidates, teachers’ associations, and parents of school children, who flooded the Ministry of Education and *Presidencia del Gobierno* with hundreds of complaints.<sup>107</sup> By the end of the dictatorship, 4,722 schools were vacant.<sup>108</sup>

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<sup>102</sup> “Notas para el presupuesto de 1ª enseñanza en 1927”, AHN, Presidencia del Gobierno, Bundle 358.

<sup>103</sup> López Martín, *Ideología*, 199-200.

<sup>104</sup> See *Anuario Estadístico 1930*, 619.

<sup>105</sup> *El Magisterio Español*, 31-12-1927.

<sup>106</sup> Cándido Ruiz Rodrigo, “Maestros, escuela y sociedad (de la Restauración a la II República)”, *Historia de la Educación*, n. 16 (1997), 176.

<sup>107</sup> Dozens of complaints about schools without teachers and teachers without a school in AHN, Presidencia del Gobierno, Bundle 356, Box 1. In 1925, maestros without posts assigned sent tens of complaints to Presidencia del Gobierno, AHN, Presidencia del Gobierno, Bundles 356, 357 and 358.

<sup>108</sup> *El Sol*, 6-2-1930.

It is hardly surprising that teachers felt outraged about this chaotic situation and things were no better with regard to their economic conditions. For all the dictatorship's repeated promises of improving teachers' salaries most of the teachers did not receive a wage rise. True, the dictatorship raised the salary of a small minority of the worst paid *maestros* – those earning 2000 and 2500 pesetas per year. Yet the majority of the teachers did not get any kind of increase and most of them had to survive on 3000 pesetas per year throughout the dictatorship<sup>109</sup> No other single issue united teachers more than salary improvements. From the pro-*primorriverista* *El Magisterio Español* to the liberal *El Magisterio Nacional*, from Catholic to Socialist journals, all education publications demanded urgent improvements in teachers' salaries.<sup>110</sup> Professionally, teachers associations of all sorts, directors of *escuelas*, and mayors signed dozens of petitions from 1926 onwards, as promised improvements failed to materialise.<sup>111</sup> But despite the cascade of complaints, the government did not substantially improve teachers' salaries. As Callejo privately acknowledged to Máximo Cuervo, *jefe* of the Presidency's Bureau, the state simply did not have the money to give in one go decent salaries to all those it intended to be the preachers of the Patria.<sup>112</sup>

Some other serious difficulties were also to be found in the government's undertaking to indoctrinate teachers. The regime was fully conscious of the social influence teachers had in villages and educating educators in National Catholicism would spread *primorriverista* values in the most remote places in Spain.<sup>113</sup> During the Civil Directory, the state sponsored a series of pedagogic courses for *maestros* all around the country. Although organised in theory for the *maestros*' professional improvement, the government used these courses for political indoctrination. Callejo and Suárez Somonte often lectured at these conferences and at times the courses closed with an oath of political allegiance to the regime.<sup>114</sup> However, there are some indications to suggest that official pedagogic courses did not always obtain the intended results. Some teachers saw the courses as an opportunity for tourism rather than

<sup>109</sup> Victoriano Fernández Ascarza, *Anuario del Maestro para 1929* [Madrid: 1929], 432-433.

<sup>110</sup> Some examples in *El Magisterio Español*, 8-7-1926; 7-10-1926; 31-12-1927; 6-10-1928; 15-10-1928; and *El Magisterio Nacional*, 8-5-1930.

<sup>111</sup> Dozens of petitions of salary increase from teachers associations and school directors in AHN, Presidencia del Gobierno, Bundles 357 and 358.

<sup>112</sup> Callejo to Máximo Cuervo, 15-2-1929, AHN, Presidencia del Gobierno, Bundle, 114, Box 1.

<sup>113</sup> Consuelo Flecha, "La vida de las maestras en España", *Historia de la Educación*, n.16 (1997), 205.

<sup>114</sup> See telegrams from the Civil Governor of Soria to Presidencia del Gobierno, 25-4-1927; Civil Governor of La Coruña to Presidencia del Gobierno, 12-10-1927, AHN, Presidencia del Gobierno, Bundle 358.

professional improvement and decided to skip lectures. For instance, this was the case of many teachers coming to Madrid for training in 1927. Once in the city, the *maestros* decided that the capital's attractions were far better than the courses and never attended the lectures.<sup>115</sup>

The government also developed important plans seeking to instil patriotic feelings in teaching students. Suárez Somonte took up a policy of modernisation of the Teacher Training Colleges (*Escuelas Normales*). He wanted them to become “maestro-making laboratories”, educating teachers “on the lights of the truths of our holy Religion and the [...] equally holy love for the Fatherland”.<sup>116</sup> A entirely new curriculum was designed stressing the history and geography of Spain and Hispanic-America, “with special emphasis on the discovery and conquest of America, crystallizing in this teaching the greatness of Spain and the natural love of those nations to the mother Patria”. The Director of Primary Education conceived the teaching profession as a “priesthood” of the nation. As any other priesthood, he argued, the main bulk of the recruits would come from the lower classes; hence, the state should provide the means to facilitate teaching by vocations funding teacher schools.<sup>117</sup> However, the *primorriveristas* failed to carry out a legal reform of the *Escuelas Normales* and the 1914 curriculum remained in place throughout the entire dictatorship. More importantly, the record suggests that the quality of teaching in the *Escuelas Normales* seriously deteriorated. The number of students in teacher colleges grew from 16,905 in the year 1923-1924 to 35,760 in 1929-1930, an increase of 111.53%.<sup>118</sup> Yet the number of teaching colleges just went up from 91 to 93 in the same period, a clear indication of overcrowded *Escuelas Normales* in where the training of “patriotic priests” became an impossible task.

In terms of mass nationalisation, the *primorriverista* reforms of primary education had patchy results. It was in the battle against illiteracy the government made serious improvements. Illiteracy rates fell from 39% in 1920 to 27% in 1930, in part due

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<sup>15</sup> The denunciation of teachers “walking around” Madrid and not attending courses in Carlos Monteaugudo to Primo de Rivera, November 1927 (no specific date indicated), AHN, Presidencia del Gobierno, Bundle 358.

<sup>16</sup> “Reorganización de las Escuelas Normales para convertirlas en talleres y laboratorios de formar maestros a la luz de las verdades de nuestra Santa Religión y al calor del amor igualmente santo de la patria”, Suárez Somonte to Primo de Rivera, 1926, AHN, Presidencia del Gobierno, Bundle 358.

<sup>17</sup> “Proyecto de decreto de reforma de la enseñanza de las escuelas normales de maestros”, AHN, Presidencia del Gobierno, Bundle 358.

<sup>18</sup> *Anuario Estadístico 1930*, xxiv, 620-621.

to the growth in the number of schools and teachers.<sup>119</sup> Yet the regime failed to turn the educational system into the indoctrinating machine it intended. A combination of structural and political factors explains the outcome. The process of nationalisation of the educational system was under-funded and the regime proved unable to build enough schools and improve teachers' economic conditions sufficiently as to operate the transformation it sought. Despite an increase in the educational budget during the dictatorship, the Restoration legacy of underdevelopment and the population growth of the 1910s and 1920s seem to have been a burden too heavy.<sup>120</sup> The promise of great changes initially gained the *maestros*' support for the regime, but as these failed to materialise teachers increasingly turned against the *primorriveristas*. Conservative teachers continued to demand more money from the state, while liberal *maestros* resented the fact that the government used public money to sponsor private education.<sup>121</sup> *Primorriverista* military control and repression of educators only rubbed salt into the injury and alienated teachers further. Without adequate funding, educational structures, and cooperation from those professionals called to be the 'priests of the fatherland', the nationalisation of primary education was doomed to fail. In early January 1930, some three weeks before the fall of the regime, a progressive teacher, José María Villegas, perfectly expressed the failure of the *primorriverista* nationalising educational policies:

"Happily, Spanish schools do not have that nationalist trait, so characteristic of many other European schools [...] Spanish schools, in this sense, are the real representative of society's thoughts and feelings. Not only they are not imperialist but they do not even have a great influence on the pupil's patriotic formation [...] Nor in texts, nor in curricula, nor in personnel, there is a desire to inculcate the pride of the patria in the Spanish child."<sup>122</sup>

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<sup>119</sup> Núñez, *La fuente*, 94.

<sup>120</sup> The Public Instruction budget during the dictatorship was as follows: 158,965,000 pesetas in 1923; 169,668,000 in 1925; 171,327,000 in 1925; 156,182,000 in 1926; 156,182,000 in 1927; 150,346,000 in 1928; 197,290,000 in 1929; and 188,114,000 in 1930. *Anuario Estadístico 1930*, xxx-xxxi.

<sup>121</sup> For the conservative teachers' view, *El Magisterio Español*, 30-4-1930. For the liberal teachers' view, *El Magisterio Nacional*, 8-5-1930.

<sup>122</sup> José María Villegas in *El Magisterio Español*, 4-1-1930.



## SECONDARY EDUCATION REFORMS

The process of economic modernisation that took place in the two decades before the dictatorship had led to a significant growth of the middle classes in Spain. This process of modernisation also brought the need of more technical and specialised training and secondary education became the key phase for preparing middle class youth not only for university studies but also for the new business, engineering, and technical schools.<sup>123</sup> The regime did not overlook the importance secondary education had gained for the bourgeoisie and carried out a reform to modernise the system. The changes sought to please the middle classes but also to nationalise teenagers, since the regime's ideologues considered adolescence a key stage in the process of political indoctrination.<sup>124</sup> As with primary education, the nationalisation of the secondary educational system aimed at bringing schools under direct control of the state, but the outcomes proved to be very different in each case. For, while the Catholic Church opposed state expansion in primary schools, Catholic educationalists understood the Church could not compete with the state in creating the thousands of primary schools needed nor did they show much interest in instructing the poor masses.<sup>125</sup> However, private Catholic secondary schools outnumbered public high schools and the ecclesiastical authorities saw state expansionism as a serious threat to both their financial interests and ideological control over the bourgeoisie.

Whilst the nationalisation of primary education concentrated on monitoring teachers, extra-curricula patriotic celebrations and structural improvements, the transformation of secondary education focussed on a curricular reform and the imposition of a single national text book for each level and area of instruction. As early as November 1923, the dictatorship demonstrated its intention to carry out a reform of secondary and university education and ordered the Council of Public Instruction to produce a report.<sup>126</sup> Published in March 1924, the report recommended modernising the system and facilitate the "full development of all physical, moral, and intellectual adolescent activities", turning secondary education into an autonomous form of

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<sup>123</sup> Capitán, *Historia de la educación*, vol. 2, 520.

<sup>124</sup> Pemán, *El hecho*, 313.

<sup>125</sup> Fernando García de Cortazar, "La nueva historia de la Iglesia contemporánea en España" in Tuñón de Lara (ed.), *Historiografía española contemporánea* [Madrid: 1980], 207-230.

<sup>126</sup> Presidencia del Gobierno to Council of Public Instruction, 30-11-1923, AHN, Presidencia del Gobierno, Bundle 356, Box 1.

education and not merely a preparation for university.<sup>127</sup> However, clashes between the dictator and the Council ended up with the advisory body being purged by the regime and the reform postponed for almost two years.

It was not until the formation of the Civil Directory that the reform began to take shape. In December 1925, Primo established the General Bureau of Secondary and University Education, an agency directly controlled by the minister of Public Instruction and created with the specific aim of restricting the power of the liberal-dominated Junta for Further Studies (*Junta para Ampliación de Estudios*).<sup>128</sup> During the first half of 1926, Wenceslao González Oliveros, Director of the General Bureau of Secondary and University Education, Eduardo Callejo and Primo himself all worked on the reform.<sup>129</sup> By June 1926, Callejo presented to Primo his blueprint of a royal decree for the reform of secondary education. Much in the same manner as the UP ideologues, the project emphasised the need to adapt the educational reform to “national psychology” and systematized the teaching periods seeking to improve the relations between primary and secondary education on the one hand, and high schools with universities on the other. What lay underneath this proposal was an attempt to unify all educational institutions under state control and avoid the “atomisation” (*cantonalismo*) produced by the liberal programs of the past.<sup>130</sup>

The Royal Decree 25 August 1926 initiated the reform of secondary education. It divided secondary education into two three-year degrees (*bachillerato elemental* and *bachillerato universitario*) in order to facilitate access to professional colleges and state agencies for those not wishing to pursue a university degree. When compared to the 1903 program it replaced, the 1926 curriculum showed significant changes. First, it put more emphasis on scientific and technical teaching, much in the same line as Bottai, the Italian Fascist Minister of Education, was to attempt in his 1930s educational reforms.<sup>131</sup> Likewise, this “scientific drive” was in perfect accord with the UP ideologues’ modernising discourse, which claimed to have scientific bases and advocated technical education in order to improve national productivity. Second, and not surprisingly, the new syllabus heavily stressed the teaching of history. Whilst the

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<sup>127</sup> The report in “Dictamen del Consejo de Instrucción Pública”, *Boletín Institución Libre de Enseñanza*, April 1924.

<sup>128</sup> Capitán, *Historia*, vol. 2, 518.

<sup>129</sup> See various documents in AHN, Presidencia del Gobierno, Bundles 199 and 358.

<sup>130</sup> “Proyecto de Decreto para la reforma de los estudios de segunda enseñanza”, AHN, Presidencia del Gobierno, Bundle 358.

1903 programme included history courses in the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> years, the *primorriveristas* made history obligatory throughout the first four years of the *bachillerato*, increasing the number of hours per week from 6 in two years to 15 in four.<sup>132</sup> Compulsory courses included World History, Spanish American History, Spanish History, and History of Spanish Civilization, a clear indication of the regime's determination to instruct teenagers in *Hispanista* imperial values.

The most controversial change in the curriculum concerned the teaching of Catholic doctrine. Since 1895, the subject of religion had been optional in Spanish high schools and no exams on Catholic doctrine were required to obtain the *bachiller* degree.<sup>133</sup> The *primorriveristas* made Catholic doctrine compulsory in the first two years of the *Bachillerato Elemental*. As the dictator explained, religion had to be mandatory since inculcating Catholic principles was as important as instruction in patriotism and honour.<sup>134</sup> It is fairly evident that the government sought to incorporate religion in the curriculum as a mean to reinforce patriotic education in high schools, following the *primorriverista* conception of Catholicism as an instrument to imbue the population with ideas of authority, order, and hierarchy.<sup>135</sup> However, religion did not become a standard subject in the curriculum. The Callejo Plan stipulated that no exams had to be taken on the subject to obtain the *bachiller* degree and, more importantly, students whose parents had declared they did not want their children to attend religion classes would be exempted.

This middle-way which turned religion into a compulsory subject but did not grant it the same status as the rest of the subjects in the curriculum predictably pleased very few. Progressive educationalists criticised the measure arguing that the state should not impose any religious dogma.<sup>136</sup> The Catholic Right, which had been campaigning for the mandatory imposition of religion in secondary education, had mixed responses.<sup>137</sup> While *El Debate* welcomed the changes, some others considered the reform was not good enough and re-started the campaign to force the dictatorship to

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<sup>131</sup> The 1926 Callejo Reform in RD 25-8-1926, *CLIP*, 1926, 508-518. For the Italian case see Talamo, "Riforma della scuola", 425-426.

<sup>132</sup> The 1903 Plan established 3 hours of history teaching per week in the 3<sup>rd</sup> year and 3 for the 4<sup>th</sup>. The 1926 established 3 hours per week in the first 3 years plus 6 hours per week in the 4<sup>th</sup> year.

<sup>133</sup> De Puelles, *Educación e ideología*, 212.

<sup>134</sup> Primo de Rivera, *Intervenciones en la Asamblea Nacional*, 336.

<sup>135</sup> See chapter 3.

<sup>136</sup> *Revista de Pedagogía*, n. 57, 1926, 431-444.

<sup>137</sup> For the campaign to establish religion as a compulsory subject see, for example, Acción Católica de la Mujer to Primo de Rivera, 10-10-1923; Palma de Mallorca mayor to Primo de Rivera, 17-10-1923; teachers of Almería to Primo de Rivera, 10-10-1923, AHN, Presidencia del Gobierno, Bundle 356, Box 1.

establish compulsory religious education without exceptions.<sup>138</sup> In November 1927, the reactionary Marchioness of la Rambla, for example, claimed in the National Assembly that religion was not really compulsory in Spanish secondary education and urged Minister of Public Instruction to abolish all exceptions. Callejo responded the government considered the study of “Catholic religion as the most perfect school of citizenry” and a key element in the spiritual improvement of the “Spanish race”, but the dictatorship never acceded to the ultramontane demands and legislation remained unchanged.<sup>139</sup>

The secondary education reforms also proved problematic for those middle classes to whom the dictatorship looked for much of its support. Callejo Plan included retroactive measures, which required students in their 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, and 6<sup>th</sup> years to take new examinations to access universities. Understandably, discontent resulted among students and parents.<sup>140</sup> By the end of November 1926, strikes broke out in high schools all around Spain but the *primorrriveristas* ignored the students’ demands and no compromise was reached.<sup>141</sup>

No other measure, however, triggered as much anger as the imposition of a prescribed single text book in secondary education. Parallel to the secondary education reform, the team Primo-Callejo engineered the creation of the single state-approved text book for each course of study – the so-called *texto único*. In early 1926, the dictator gave guidelines for the eventual legislation on the single text for both primary and secondary education: books must be inspired by “the principles of state religion, a fervent love for Spain and a profound respect for the established political system”. Teachers could give complementary explanations to the book, “providing those were within the limits of the love for the patria, respect for the state’s religion, Christian morals and established public institutions”.<sup>142</sup> Primo foresaw the potential controversy that such a state imposition of nationalist, religious and pro-dictatorship principles could provoke, but the Marquis de Estella was not willing to compromise over the role of the state in the nationalisation of the masses. Weeks later, in a new report, he insisted on the patriotic principles that should guide the single texts and designed a system by which

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<sup>138</sup> For the views of *El Debate* see Díaz de la Guardia, “La enseñanza”, 24.

<sup>139</sup> The debate in the National Assembly in *El Noticiero*, 30-11-1927.

<sup>140</sup> Rial, *Revolution*, 218.

<sup>141</sup> Ignoring students’ demands did not mean ignoring their protests. The government closely followed the strikes and civil governors reported to Primo about the development of events. See Civil Governor of Orense to Presidency, 23-11-1926, AHN, Presidencia del Gobierno, Bundle 358.

<sup>142</sup> “Estudio sobre el texto único”, AHN, Presidencia del Gobierno, Bundle 358.

the state would have absolute control of the selection, production and sales of the text books. Moreover, Primo ordered his minister of Public Instruction to draft a royal order on the *texto único* “in virile and uncompromising language, defending the undisputable right of the state to conduct and adjust education”.<sup>143</sup> In August 1926, Callejo presented his project to the dictator and the decree on the *texto único* was finally approved late that month. Callejo defended the right of the state to produce text books, arguing that a state monopoly would not only improve books’ “doctrinal contents” but it would also reduce their cost, [economically] alleviating the middle class”.

Despite government efforts to gain the support of the bourgeoisie, the *primorriveristas* soon faced problems with the implementation of the *texto único*. Initially, Primo wanted the single text to be in the schools by the academic year 1926-1927, but the Ministry of Public Instruction’s delay in producing the royal decree forced the regime to postpone its implementation until the following year. Once the system was functioning, the publication of official text books still did not follow immediately. Text books for the courses in Spanish Civilisation and American History were not distributed until 1929 and those for Spanish History and World History never saw the light of day. Not surprisingly, in those cases where the official books were published, they reproduced the *primorriverista* interpretation of Spanish history. For example, Francisco Yela Trujillo’s text book on Spanish Civilisation portrayed Menéndez Pelayo as the “wisest scholar of nineteenth century Spain”, described the “discovery and civilisation of America” as “one of the greatest deeds of human history”, and, based on Julián Juderías, attacked jealous foreigners for fabricating the Black Legend.<sup>144</sup>

Yet the existence of an official text book did not necessarily mean that students were using it. As some teachers had predicted before the legislation was approved, the appearance of “official little bibles” for every subject would only bring confusion to the educational system, since teachers would continue to use their own materials.<sup>145</sup> As the regime soon came to know, this prediction proved right and many high school teachers kept on recommending their own books even after the official ones were published. The government reacted by publishing a royal order in September 1928 emphasising the

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<sup>143</sup> “Bases para dictar una Real orden para el Ministerio de Instrucción Pública, referente al texto único en las enseñanzas primaria y segunda, o sea el Bachillerato”, AHN, Presidencia del Gobierno, Bundle 358.

<sup>144</sup> Juan Francisco Yela Utrilla, *Historia de la civilización española en sus relaciones con la universal* [Madrid: 1928], 506, 509-512, 517. As many other *primorriverista* academics Yela supported the rebels during the Civil War and co-operated with the Francoist attempt to re-write Spanish history. See his work *Una nueva concepción de la Historia como Historia patria* [Oviedo: 1940].

<sup>145</sup> Eduardo Gómez Baquero in *Revista de Segunda Enseñanza*, June 1926, 245-247.

teachers' obligation to use only official text, but this legislation seems to have had very little impact and denunciations of professors using their own works in the schools continued.<sup>146</sup>

While the efficacy of the single text as an instrument of nationalisation was extremely limited, the political storm it provoked was unprecedented. Progressive educationists opposed the single text mainly on pedagogic grounds, claiming it diminished the figure of the teacher and hampered students' learning processes, for it denied the plural nature of knowledge.<sup>147</sup> Liberals did not overlook the fact that the dictatorship was using the state apparatus to instruct the masses in National Catholic values, something they strongly disapproved: "the state is the worst of all churches when it comes to fabricating dogma", wrote Gómez Baquero, envisaging the failure of the *primorriverista* task of doctrinal unification.<sup>148</sup>

Contrary to what it has sometimes been suggested, the single text was far from satisfying the clerical ambitions of the Right.<sup>149</sup> Catholic teachers felt uneasy about the imposition of a single text and even some pro-*primorriverista* publications, such as *El Magisterio Español*, opposed the new measure.<sup>150</sup> The state monopoly on the contents and production of schoolbooks became a core problem for the Church. The Augustinian Father Delgado, described the single text as "tyrannical" and "against Natural Law", but he especially resented the fact that no cleric had been appointed to the tribunals in charge of determining the content of the books. In his view, the Church, as the constitutional guarantor of the Catholic faith, had the right to oversee the single text.<sup>151</sup> The reference to the 1876 Constitution should not come as a surprise, for it indicates that the ecclesiastical elites had begun to realise they were better off under the Restoration. What the words of Father Delgado revealed was the Church's willingness to cooperate on equal terms with the state, maintaining ecclesiastical autonomy and its ability to intervene in public educational matters at the same time, as had been the case from 1876. But what the *primorriverista* reforms sought was subordination of the Church to the state.

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<sup>146</sup> Royal Order, 29-9-1928, CLIP, 1928, 484-485. See, also an anonymous letter denouncing high-school teachers, who "impose their own books to students, despite the fact that official text books are already published", 28-10-1928, AHN, Presidencia del Gobierno, Bundle 358

<sup>147</sup> Gabriel Alomar in *Boletín de la Institución Libre de Enseñanza*, 29-2-1924, 54-56.

<sup>148</sup> *Revista de Segunda Enseñanza*, June 1926, 245-247.

<sup>149</sup> For the view of the single text as a victory for the Right's clerical ambitions see López Martín, *Ideología (II)*, 32.

<sup>150</sup> *El Magisterio Español*, 31-8-1926.

<sup>151</sup> *Revista de Segunda Enseñanza*, n. 28, January 1927, 6-18.

Speaking for the Jesuits, Father Teodoro Rodríguez went a step further in his criticism of the *texto único* and denied the state had the right to select books or teachers. In the name of “freedom of education”, he proposed leaving education entirely to the law of supply and demand, which would “eliminate those [schools] with no right to exist; so the paying public could freely choose”.<sup>152</sup> Behind this social-Darwinist approach to education, there was an unmistakable reaction against the *primorriverista* policies which effectively reinforced the state as the supreme educational authority. The Church had expected, and indeed received, direct economic support from the state but now that the implications of this official sponsorship became clear the alarm bells were ringing in ecclesiastical quarters. As soon as the legislation on the *texto único* was approved, the integrist *El Siglo Futuro* launched a campaign against it, accusing the government of appropriating ecclesiastical prerogatives.<sup>153</sup> More importantly, Social Catholics, who constituted much of the UP social base, also objected the reform on very similar grounds.<sup>154</sup> By late 1928, *El Debate* called Catholics to resist the process of *primorriverista* state control. A common technique to avoid censorship was criticising Mussolini when the intended object was Primo. *El Debate* severely condemned Fascist interventionism in education and denounced the state’s right to transfer Catholic teachers between posts as a scandalous state intrusion. The last paragraph of the editorial clearly expressed cooperation with, and not subordination to, the *primorriverista* regime was the aim of the Catholic Right:

“In these difficult and anarchic times, Catholics must, on the one hand, support governments and civil authorities; strengthening established powers. But on the other hand, [they] must be ready to defend the freedom and legitimate rights of the Catholic Church, against the intrusion of the civil power.”<sup>155</sup>

When in 1928 Primo granted the right to issue degrees to the religious university colleges of Deusto and El Escorial, thus breaching the monopoly of the state over higher education, the rift between the Church and the regime was already too wide as to comfort Catholics. The Church certainly welcomed the measure but was fully aware

<sup>152</sup> Teodoro Rodríguez, *El Estatismo y la Educación Nacional en los Países Civilizados* [Madrid: 1928], 16.

<sup>153</sup> *El Siglo Futuro*, 28-8-1926; 29-8-1926; 30-8-1926.

<sup>154</sup> The Social Catholics’ campaign against the *texto único* in Enrique Herrera Oria, brother of the editor of *El Debate*, *Educación de una España nueva* [Madrid: 1934].

that Deusto and El Escorial had a restricted curriculum and were very small compared to the state universities. This was a minuscule gain that did not bring the educational system under Church control – the aspiration of the ecclesiastical authorities in September 1923.<sup>156</sup> True, the concession of legal parity to the Catholic university colleges united liberal scholars, the democratic left and students in their opposition to the regime. University reform led to unprecedented student demonstrations, severe governmental repression and the resignation of the most prominent scholars in Spanish universities (Ortega y Gasset, Fernando de los Rios, Luis Jiménez de Asúa), all of these factors which catalysed the fall of the regime. Yet, for the Catholic Church, the concessions could not balance the loss of “freedom of education” and the imposition of the single text in secondary education, the ecclesiastical stronghold which assured its ideological control over the middle classes.

In late 1929, Catholics received new ammunition from Rome in their battle against the dictatorship. Pius XI’s *Divini Illius Magistri* was a fierce attack to state intervention in educational matters. In exactly the same social-Darwinist line that Spanish Catholics had been arguing in the 1920s, the encyclical defended the “freedom of private education” and denied the state the right to interfere in educational matters, let alone to prioritise state schools.<sup>157</sup> After the fall of the dictatorship, Catholics went on to the offensive. They created new associations to defend the “educational rights” of the Church and soon demanded from Berenguer a total reform of the *primorriverista* educational system, the “most violent, unjust, and un-educational regime of LEGAL OPPRESSION in Europe (except Russia)”.<sup>158</sup>

The clash over education between the dictatorship and the Church reflected an essential ideological division between the *primorriveristas* and the Catholic Right. For the Catholic Right, Catholicism was the supreme value-system and religious doctrine the main tool of political socialization. Patriotism was a complementary element of Catholic doctrine, but state expansion was viewed as a threat to the Church’s privileges. For the *primorriveristas* the nation was the supreme sacred value and state agencies the necessary tools for mass nationalisation. As in the case of Italy, the policies of mass indoctrination required a process of nationalisation of the educational system that

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<sup>155</sup> *El Debate*, 27-11-1928.

<sup>156</sup> William J. Callahan, *The Catholic Church in Spain, 1875-1998* [Washington D.C.: 2000], 157.

<sup>157</sup> For a discussion of the encyclical see Juan Manuel Fernández Soria, *Estado y educación en la España contemporánea* [Madrid: 2002], 101-102.



inevitably led to serious tensions with the Church. In no other place did this become more obvious than in Catalonia, where the regime concentrated its efforts to “Spanishize” (*españolizar*) the educational system, only to provoke ecclesiastical outrage thus deepening the cleavage between Church and state.

## THE ‘SPANISHIZATION’ OF CATALONIA

The process of mass nationalisation acquired specific connotations in those territories where regional languages co-existed with Castilian. Primo saw the propagation of the Spanish language in Catalonia and the Basque Country as “the only effective means to widen and strengthen the spiritual and racial bases of Great Spain”.<sup>159</sup> The regime believed “separatists and regionalists” had used schools during the Restoration to “de-Spanishize Catalan children by teaching exclusively in Catalan” and, therefore, it was the dictatorship’s duty to foster an utterly Castilian education.<sup>160</sup> The aim of *primorriverista* linguistic policy was twofold. First, it used language to transmit Spanish national identity in Catalonia and the Basque Country. At the same time, it sought to preclude regionalists and nationalists from using Catalan and Basque languages as tools for the political socialization of children in schools. As mentioned above, during the first weeks of the dictatorship the regime imposed teaching in Castilian in every single public educational institution in Spain, legislated prison sentences for teachers propagating secessionist doctrines in schools, and cut funding for teaching regional languages in state educational institutions.

But the regime also wanted to curb the influence of regional languages outside schools and after his return from a state visit to Italy in November 1923, Primo began to toy with the idea of prohibiting the clergy to preach in regional languages. The initiative was not new. Already in 1902, Romanones had issued a decree requiring the teaching of catechism in Castilian. But the wave of opposition this provoked from the clergy and the Catholic Right all around Spain eventually forced the liberal government to resign. The new conservative government of Sivela abolished the controversial decree only a

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<sup>158</sup> Petition of the Federación de Amigos de la Enseñanza to the government of General Dámaso Berenguer, 13-6-1930, quoted in Boyd, *Historia*, 178.

<sup>159</sup> The dictator expressed this view in his 1928 public argument with the leader of the Catalan regionalists, Francesc Cambó. Miguel Primo de Rivera and Francisco Cambó, *Ecos de una polémica* [Santander: 1961], 3-4. Similar views were expressed by Primo in his debate in the National Assembly with Ayats and Victor Pradera. See Primo de Rivera, *Intervenciones*, 39-59.

<sup>160</sup> Díaz Retg, *España*, 229-230.

month after the Liberals had approved it.<sup>161</sup> Like Romanones, for Primo teaching the catechism in Spanish was an important issue, since Castilian was considered the guarantor of national unity and the main hope for cultural homogenisation. As had been the case in France, the Spanish Church promoted the teaching of catechism in regional languages and dialects, not only because it wanted to make sure that children would correctly understand religious postulates but also because it granted priests a privileged position in children's education, compared to the state.<sup>162</sup> Thus, the issue of language was directly related to the power of the Church and the state to effectively indoctrinate the masses in non-Castilian speaking areas.

In the Basque Country, the *primorriverista* policies of Spanishization were far less controversial than in Catalonia. Some schools were closed and teachers arrested for teaching in Basque, but the regime was lenient and pragmatic when approaching the issue of languages.<sup>163</sup> In early 1924, General Echagüe, the Military Governor of Vizcaya and a Basque speaker himself, published an official note stating that the Basque language could be used in all those areas in where Castilian speakers were a minority. No punishment, the note followed, should be taken against those speaking or writing in Euskera.<sup>164</sup>

One of the main reasons for this *primorriverista* approach in the Basque provinces was the relative willingness of the Basque Church to co-operate with the dictatorship. Although some priests were reprimanded and fined by military officers for preaching in Basque, the bishops of Vitoria during the dictatorship, Zacarías Martínez and Mateo Múgica, were staunch monarchists with very few sympathies for Basque nationalism, and no Episcopal protest greeted the prohibition of catechism classes in Euskera.<sup>165</sup> They recommended priests to preach in Spanish or Euskera depending on which language was the spoken by the majority of the population in their parishes. As a consequence, during the dictatorship, preaching in Basque continued to be habitual in Basque-speaking areas, something the regime tolerated together with the publication of Basque cultural magazines sponsored by the Church. Moreover, to the dismay of Basque nationalists, a good number of rural priests in Vizcaya joined the UP, a move that certainly pleased the *primorriverista* authorities and strengthened the bond between

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<sup>161</sup> Del Pozo, "The Ribirth", 87.

<sup>162</sup> Del Pozo, *Curriculum*, 192-193.

<sup>163</sup> In Tolosa, for instance, a school was closed and the teacher put on trial because she taught in Euskera only. Rubio, *Crónica* [1986], 130.

<sup>164</sup> *Ibid.*, 136.

the Basque Church and the dictatorship.<sup>166</sup> Finally, the fact that *primorriverista* repression against members of the Basque nationalist movement was selective, as opposed to the indiscriminate actions in Catalonia, indicates that the regime was far less concerned with the impact of Basque nationalism than with the spread of Catalanism.<sup>167</sup>

In Catalonia, the *primorriverista* strategy of nationalisation coupled with the one used for the renewal of the educational system, first repressing teachers and institutions considered of guilt of spreading regionalist or nationalist doctrines and, then, promoting schools, educational institutions, fiestas and lectures to cultivate Spanish nationalist values among the population. A letter from Alfonso Sala, then leader of the UMN, to the *Presidencia del Gobierno* perfectly illustrates the inquisitorial character of some of the regime's supporters in Barcelona. In November 1923, Sala demanded the urgent abolishment of the Barcelona Municipal Cultural Commission, which he considered Catalanist, and the punishment of the "separatist" *Federación de Maestros de Cataluña* and the *Asociació de Mestress Oficiales de Barcelona*. He also insisted on the need to purge the inspectors, accused of not defending properly "the state's rights" and being lenient with regionalist teachers. Moreover, Sala wanted all teachers in the province of Barcelona to pledge loyalty to "the interests of Spain". Those under suspicion of not fulfilling their "sacred duty" should be sanctioned for life or sent to some other town in Spain outside Catalonia. Only with these measures, Sala concluded, "would the phantom of Catalan separatism go away for ever; [and] Spanish schools would achieve the miracle of inculcating love for the larger Patria in the masses".<sup>168</sup>

The regime moved fast to purge teachers considered Catalanists. As early as October 1923, teachers and inspectors were instructed to denounce colleagues who were teaching in a different language than Spanish.<sup>169</sup> Dozens of state-school *maestros* were denounced by their colleagues, inspectors or, simply, by private individuals.<sup>170</sup> Actions were also taken against inspectors considered too lenient, who, as recommended by

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<sup>165</sup> Callahan, *The Catholic Church*, 161-163; Lannon, "Modern Spain", 582.

<sup>166</sup> Santiago de Pablo, Ludger Mees and José Rodríguez, *El péndulo patriótico. Historia del Partido Nacionalista Vasco, I: 1895-1936* [Barcelona: 1999], 192-194.

<sup>167</sup> The number of Basque nationalists jailed by the dictatorship is difficult to estimate. According to the Basque nationalist press 50 people were in jail in 1925 for "rebellious against the state". By 1928 the Basque nationalist press claimed that 100 Basques had suffered "persecution, exile or jail", which indicates that repression concentrated on Basque nationalist leaders. *Ibid.*, 173.

<sup>168</sup> Alfonso Sala to Presidencia del Gobierno, November 1923, AHN, Presidencia del Gobierno, Bundle 356, Box1.

<sup>169</sup> Circular 27-10-1923, in *La Vanguardia*, 28-10-1923. Some criticism of the prohibition to teach in Catalan in *La Veu* 30-10-1923.

Sala, were sent to other Spanish provinces outside Catalonia and replaced by *primorriverista* loyalists.<sup>171</sup> The regime targeted non-state schools too. Military and civil governors, with the assistance of the *delegados*, played an essential role by, first, purging municipal councils of those considered regionalists and, later, dismissing municipal employees accused of being Catalanists, which tightened the control over municipal schools and libraries.<sup>172</sup>

The *Mancomunitat* was initially put under temporary military supervision. The cultural and teaching institutions controlled by the *Mancomunitat* were rapidly purged, the Universidad Industrial closed down and Roman Sol, the *Mancomunitat* culture councillor and member of *Acció Catalana*, jailed.<sup>173</sup> Putting linguistic policies in the forefront, General Losada, interim director of the institution, ordered all schools and cultural centres sponsored by the *Mancomunitat* to teach exclusively in Spanish, on 24 January 1924.<sup>174</sup> A week later, Losada named Sala president of the *Mancomunitat*, a post the leader of the UMN would hold until Primo decided to abolish the institution in March 1925.

Nor were state universities free from the *primorriverista* 'crusade' against Catalan language in educational institutions. Although Spanish was the customary language in Catalan universities, the dictatorship specifically prohibited the use of the regional language in Catalan and Valencian higher education. This measure was especially important in teacher training colleges, where state-sponsored courses on Catalan language had been free for all students since 1916. The *primorriveristas* saw these classes as a clear threat to their project of indoctrinating teachers in Spanish nationalist values and, during the first months of the dictatorship, the courses were brought to an end in the *Escuelas Normales* of Lérida, Tarragona, and Gerona.<sup>175</sup>

Dictatorial control of the University of Barcelona also became evident quickly. In November 1923, Primo appointed as its director Andrés Martínez Vargas, a well-

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<sup>170</sup> See AHN, Presidencia del Gobierno, Bundles 101, 217 (Box 1) and 358. More accusations in AHN, Gobernación, Serie A, Bundle 61, Box 3.

<sup>171</sup> For example, the RO 19-4-1928, transferred 7 inspectors of the province of Barcelona to some other Spanish provinces in Andalusia, Castile, and the Balearic Islands. *BOMIP*, 1-5-1928, n. 35, 588.

<sup>172</sup> See, for example, secret report of the Civil Governor of Barcelona to Martínez Anido, 7-10-1924, on the discharge of eight municipal employees in the Vich district AHN, Gobernación, Serie A, Bundle 17, Box 2, File 22. For a critique of the actions of the delegates in the municipalities *La Veu de Catalunya*, 22-12-1925. For the dismissal of the mayors of Tarrasa and Sabadell, accused of separatism, see *El Sol*, 19-9-1923 and *El Debate*, 20-9-1923.

<sup>173</sup> For the imprisonment of Roman Sol see Rubio, *Crónica* [1986], 123. For the closure of the Universidad Industrial see Casassas, *La Dictadura*, 151-152.

<sup>174</sup> *La Vanguardia*, 25-1-1924.

known conservative and anti-Catalanist. His appointment provoked the opposition of liberal professors and the members of the *Federació Catalana d'Estudiants Catòlics*, who complained about the non-democratic election of the new director. The regime reacted by creating an information network within the University of Barcelona. Staunch *primorrriveristas* sent secret reports to Martínez Anido and Máximo Cuervo in Madrid, denouncing the political activities of professors, lectures and student associations.<sup>176</sup> On the basis of these denunciations, the dictatorship dismissed professors, closed down publications and even imprisoned the director of the journal *Vida Universitària*, when he refused to publish the magazine in Castilian as ordered by the civil governor of Barcelona, General Milans de Bosch.<sup>177</sup> When in 1925 the Minister of Public Instruction and the Medical Faculty of the University of Barcelona clashed over the language issue, the government temporarily closed it down. In April 1929, when the revolts in the universities were at their height and the conflict had spread all around Spain, Primo closed down the University of Barcelona.

As explained in Chapter 2, the Catalan Church, considered not merely a vehicle of linguistic and cultural transmission but a propagator of nationalist ideas, did not escape *primorrriverista* repression. Throughout the entire dictatorship, the government closed down ecclesiastical associations, arrested and exiled dozens of priests, banned religious processions and purged Catholic schools. What lay behind these constant attacks on clerics was not merely the purging from the Catalan Church of 'separatist' elements but the control of an institution considered a challenge to the power of the state. At stake also was the whole *primorrriverista* project of Spanishization in Catalonia and for these purposes the regime tried to force the Catalan clergy to preach in Castilian. Primo had this idea in mind since the early months of the dictatorship, but he knew that achieving it in practice would not be easy. The Vatican had defended the preaching in vernacular languages since the Council of Trent in the sixteenth century and Catalan bishops had reaffirmed their commitment to the provision of religious services in Catalan just a few months before Primo's coup. Thus, the dictator's suggestion to

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<sup>175</sup> RO 21-12-1923, *Gaceta*, 29-12-1923.

<sup>176</sup> See, for instance, a secret report from Professors Martínez and Pérez Agudo to the Presidencia del Gobierno, July 1927, denouncing colleagues and reporting on "illegal" meetings between Madrid and Barcelona university teachers, AHN, Presidencia del Gobierno, Bundle 358. See also, the reports sent by Rafael Marín, from the University of Barcelona, to Máximo Cuervo on the students association during the 1929 university revolt; and the letters of Máximo Cuervo to the Minister of Public Instruction on the repressive measures taken against members of the *Federación Escolar Universitaria* in Catalonia, AHN, Presidencia del Gobierno, Bundle 114.

<sup>177</sup> Roig, *La Dictadura*, 289, 298.

preach in Castilian found strong resistance both in Rome and Catalonia. Leading the opposition to this measure was Cardinal Vidal i Barraquer, the supreme Catholic authority in Catalonia. He declared himself open to cooperation with the regime but he was unwilling to order priests to preach in Castilian.<sup>178</sup>

Facing resistance, Primo took action in three different fronts. First, he personally intervened to obtain the appointment of non-Catalans to rule the region's dioceses and secure the transfer of Catalan clerics to outside of Catalonia. Even anti-Catalanist clerics, such as the Archdeacon of Tarragona Isidro Gomá y Tomás, were, as Catalans, precluded from promotion inside Catalonia and sent to non-Catalan dioceses.<sup>179</sup> Although the dictator publicly denied the existence of a policy of "marginalization" of Catalan priests, the truth is that this idea constituted a main element of the *primorriverista* process of nationalisation. In a private letter to Admiral Magaz, Primo stated that if the Catalan clergy mobilised its nationalist supporters, the solution would be to organise "a terrific raid and send [the priests] to serve in Andalusia, before their actions could have any effect".<sup>180</sup>

The second front was indeed in Catalonia itself where actions against priests preaching in Catalan continued to be organised from the Captaincy General of Catalonia. The creation in 1927 of the *Junta de Acción Ciudadana* in Barcelona provided generals Barrera and Milans del Bosch with the possibility to co-ordinate the repression of dissident clerics with civilian *primorriveristas*. The *Junta Ciudadana* actively conducted detentions of priests, penalised religious educators teaching in Catalan and fined ecclesiastical institutions accused of propagating anti-Spanish ideas, increasing even further the climate of political repression in Barcelona.<sup>181</sup> The confrontation between civil and ecclesiastical authorities became extremely tense in Barcelona, where the Bishop of the province, Josep Miralles, refused to order his priests to preach in Castilian. Despite pressure from Barrera and Milans, Miralles maintained that the Vatican orders were to preach in the vernacular language and constantly declined sermonizing in Castilian. Moreover, he denounced the anti-clerical repression of the civil governor in Barcelona to Rome, urging the Vatican to defend the Catalan Church against state interference. However, the complaints of the Bishop of Barcelona

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<sup>178</sup> Ramón Muntanyola, *Vidal i Barraquer* [Barcelona: 1971], 144-145, 451-460.

<sup>179</sup> Callahan, *The Catholic Church*, 159.

<sup>180</sup> Primo de Rivera to Magaz, 5-6-1925, in Armiñán, *Epistolario*, 141.

<sup>181</sup> For the activities of the Junta de Barcelona from 1927 to 1929, see AHN, Presidencia del Gobierno, Bundle 383.

to the Vatican were to no avail. In 1930, after heavy lobbying by the Spanish government in Rome, the Vatican transferred Miralles to the less important diocese of Majorca.<sup>182</sup>

Rome became the third front of *primorriverista* action. Since the Holy See had the right to appoint and dismiss cardinals and bishops in Spain, the dictatorship launched a diplomatic offensive to compel the Vatican to abandon its protection of the Catalan episcopate. In 1926, during his visit to Italy, Eduardo Aunós, the Spanish Labour Minister, met the papal secretary of state, Cardinal de Gasparri, and demanded more cooperation from the Vatican with the *primorriverista* task of Spanishization. Aunós requested from the Pope a public condemnation of Catalan regionalism, the transfer of Vidal to the first available archdiocese outside of Catalonia, and the appointment of *españolista* bishops in all Catalan dioceses.<sup>183</sup> Primo seemed determined to make the Vatican change its policies even if it meant to risk a schism. He informed Vidal that Rome had to choose between the regime and Catalonia and threatened “to expel the Nuncio and move straight away to the constitution of a National Church”, should the Vatican take the “wrong side”.<sup>184</sup> One can only speculate on whether Primo would have gone as far as to create a Spanish National Church, but the truth is that diplomatic pressures soon began to pay off. In 1927, the Nuncio, Federico Tedeschini, exhorted the Catalan clergy to preach in Castilian and Vidal was threatened with a transfer to Zaragoza or Granada. Furthermore, Admiral Magaz, the Spanish ambassador to the Vatican since 1926, convinced De Gasparri to open an investigation on Vidal i Barraquer and the use of Catalan language in pastorals. The papal secretary of state sent the Nuncio and the Head of the Jesuits to inquire into the Catalanist propaganda by priests.<sup>185</sup> As a result of the investigation and the pressures from the Spanish government, the Vatican ordered the Catalan clergy that no seminarist “contaminated with Catalanism” should be allowed to enter the priesthood. Although Rome did not

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<sup>182</sup> The three-year long confrontation between Miralles and the *primorriverista* authorities in Barcelona in Luis de Llera, “Política religiosa en Cataluña durante la Dictadura de Primo de Rivera (1923-1930): El archivo Miralles”, in idem, *La modernización cultural de España, 1898-1975* [Madrid: 2000], 103-141.

<sup>183</sup> Eduardo González Calleja, *La España de Primo de Rivera (1923-1930). La modernización autoritaria* [Madrid: 2004], 59.

<sup>184</sup> Muntanyola, *Vidal*, 146.

<sup>185</sup> On the visit of the nuncio see General Secretary of the Ministerio de Estado to Magaz, 25-2-1928; Magaz to Ministro de Gracia y Justicia, 25-2-1928. For the Spanish ambassador in the Vatican declaring the Holy See would support the Spanish government position against the Catalan Church after the nuncio's visit see Magaz to Ministro de Estado, 29-9-1928. On the visit of the Head of the Jesuits see Magaz to Primo de Rivera, 15-12-1928. All documents in Archivo del Ministerio de Asuntos Exteriores, Fondo Histórico, H 2824.

establish Castilian as the pastoral language, it instructed Catalan priests to underline Spanish patriotism in their sermons and required that the Catalan catechism include new passages stressing love for the Spanish patria.<sup>186</sup>

The new Vatican regulations were a victory for the regime. Nevertheless, changes in liturgies, catechism and sermons had been achieved at a very expensive price. Even after all the repression and its diplomatic efforts, the regime could not force the Catalan clergy to preach in Castilian. In turn, the Catalan clergy and laity considered the *primorriverista* policies anti-clerical and severely resented dictatorial repression. Moreover, the cleavage between the regime and the Social Catholics widened due to the *primorriverista* hostility towards the Catalan Church. In February 1928, *El Debate* claimed *primorriverista* actions were a clear violation of the Church's right to choose the language in which the divine word was to be transmitted.<sup>187</sup> As in the case of educational policies, the intensification of state-led policies of nationalisation deepened the *primorriverista*-Social Catholic divide.

The *primorriverista* strategy of nationalisation was not solely based on the repression of doctrines considered anti-Spanish. It also required the promotion of National Catholic values in schools and cultural institution. After the dissolution of the *Mancomunitat* in March 1925, the government concentrated all its efforts into promoting cultural *españolista* policies from the provincial governments, or *Diputaciones Provinciales*. In Barcelona, Primo put Milá i Camps, Count of Montseny and a well-know Spanish nationalist, in charge of the *Diputación*. The provincial government became the official centre of the *primorriverista* cultural programmes. The Department of Education the organized the donation of books, sponsored cultural associations, arranged patriotic conferences and granted scholarships for a variety of courses. The importance of the institution for the *primorriveristas* becomes obvious when the educational budget of the *Diputación* is compared to that of the *Mancomunitat*. In the year 1922-1923, the *Mancomunitat* had a budget of 2,401,872 pesetas allocated to its Department of Public Instruction; while, in 1929, the *Diputación* resources for education amounted to 2,550,233 pesetas - a figure all the more significant

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<sup>186</sup> Bonet, "L'Eglèsia", 335-352.

<sup>187</sup> *El Debate* 8-2-1928; 12-2-1928; and 13-2-1928.



if we consider it relates to just the province of Barcelona, whereas the *Mancomunitat*'s budget covered all four Catalan provinces.<sup>188</sup>

The Department of Education of the *Diputació* of Barcelona devoted much of its efforts and resources to buy books and distribute them amongst schools and public libraries. The nature of these works was essentially patriotic, devoted to hail the dictator, the *Somatén* or the Spanish race, although Spanish and Hispanic-American literary classics and religious publications were also included among the donations.<sup>189</sup> Special attention was also paid to the preparation of patriotic fiestas. In 1925, for example, editions of the *Revista Hispanoamericana* were distributed among libraries and schools to commemorate the *Fiesta de la Raza*.<sup>190</sup> As instructed by the *primorrriverista* legislation, the *Diputació* annually organised patriotic conferences in all public libraries and educational institutions of the province and donated hundreds of books to national and municipal schools to celebrate the *Fiesta del Libro*.<sup>191</sup>

For all the promotion of the Castilian language by the *Diputació*, it is important to note that books in Catalan were not expressly excluded from the donations and, in some cases, they constituted around 30% of the lots bestowed.<sup>192</sup> Nor did the *Diputació* exclude sponsoring research on Catalan language. After the dissolution of the *Mancomunitat*, the Chair of Catalan Grammar was transferred to the *Diputació* of Barcelona, which continued to fund the institution and different research projects on the Catalan language.<sup>193</sup> This funding of Catalan studies was in agreement with some other measures taken by the regime, such as the creation of a Chair at the University of Barcelona for studying the work of the Catalan philosopher Ramón Llull in 1925, or the appointment of eight academics to study the Catalan, Basque and Galician languages at

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<sup>188</sup> Data in Enric Ucelay, "La Diputació durant la Dictadura: 1923-1930", in Borja de Riquer (ed.), *Història de la Diputació de Barcelona*, vol. 2, 252.

<sup>189</sup> Various lists of the works bought and distributed by the *Diputació* in ADPB, Department Instrucció Pública, Bundles, 4176, 4177 and 4181.

<sup>190</sup> For the distribution of a special number of *Revista Hispanoamericana* in schools and libraries, ADPB, Department Instrucció Pública, Bundle, 4176, File 49.

<sup>191</sup> For the organisation of the conferences and the distribution of books in 1926 and 1927, ADPB, Department Instrucció Pública, Bundle 4178, File 92 and Bundle 4181, Files 97, 98 and 100.

<sup>192</sup> For example, the donation to the library of the UP of Sabadell in February 1928. The *Diputació* de Barcelona donated over 100 books, 30% of them in Catalan. The list of the books donated in *Diputació* to Plácido Marcet Datzira, *jefe* of the UP of Sabadell, 28-2-1928, ADPB, Department Instrucció Pública, Bundle, 4184, File 50.

<sup>193</sup> For the transfer of the Cátedra de Gramática Catalana to the *Diputació* de Barcelona see ADPB, Department Instrucció Pública, Bundle, 4176, File 12. For the sponsoring of research projects on Catalan language see, for example, the grants given in 1926 and 1927 for the "Diccionario Balari", a Catalan lexical-graphic inventory, ADPB, Department Instrucció Pública, Bundle, 4181, File 54.

the Real Academia de la Lengua in Madrid in 1926.<sup>194</sup> It is therefore fairly evident that the *primorrriveristas* did not seek to “exterminate” Catalan language, as it is at times suggested.<sup>195</sup> The regime imposed Castilian as an instrument of nationalisation in schools and public institutions, yet the *primorrriverista* conception of regional languages as folkloric relics did not preclude the promotion of their studies in the academia, while press and publications in Catalan were also tolerated.

The civil government of Barcelona acquired in the *Diputació* a key instrument of the *primorrriverista* nationalisation programme. In early 1926, the *Diputació*’s Department of Public Instruction sponsored a series of courses in the public libraries of Pineda, Canet del Mar and Sallent, which combined nationalist topics, such as *Hispanidad*, with professional lectures on fishing and agriculture.<sup>196</sup> Once the courses ended, the *Diputació* assisted the *delegados* in arranging the Sunday patriotic conferences in the province.<sup>197</sup> Indoctrination of teachers was not overlooked. Since 1926, the Department of Public Instruction organised patriotic pedagogic conferences in the Barcelona teacher training college specifically aimed at teaching how to lecture on patriotic values.<sup>198</sup> Nor it was women’s education neglected by the *primorrriveristas*. The provincial government maintained the funding of the *Biblioteca Popular para la Mujer*, initially established in 1909, and created new grants for study at the Women’s Professional College of Barcelona.<sup>199</sup> As in the cases of the *primorrriverista* plans for women’s political and physical indoctrination analysed in Chapter 4, it is possible to observe here the regime’s belief that women should be integrated into the labour market as well as nationalised. Once again, this approach to the social and ‘patriotic’ role of women clearly differed from the Fascist model in Italy, which condemned women to a passive role at home.<sup>200</sup>

<sup>194</sup> For the Cátedra de Ramon Llull in Barcelona see Roig, *La dictadura*, 295. For the appointment of eight specialists in Catalan, Basque, and Galician for the *Real Academia de la Lengua* see Rial, *Revolution*, 218-219.

<sup>195</sup> For example, in the works of Francesc Ferrer i Gironès, *Catalanofobia* [Barcelona: 2000], 241; idem, *La persecució política de la llengua catalana* [Barcelona: 1986], 139.

<sup>196</sup> “Ciclo de conferencias en bibliotecas populares durante el presente curso”, ADPB, Department Instrucció Pública, Bundle, 4177, File 15.

<sup>197</sup> *La Vanguardia*, 27-8-1926.

<sup>198</sup> *La Vanguardia*, 27-8-1926 and 29-8-1926.

<sup>199</sup> For the sponsoring of the *Biblioteca Popular para la Mujer* see ADPB, FR, 246, P763-P804. For the grants see ADPB, FR 29, Department Instrucció Pública, Bundle 4176, File 59.

<sup>200</sup> Turatti, secretary of the Fascist party, believed that “women were born to be at home and not to work in public offices”. His comments in *ABC*, 16-10-1928. Nevertheless, Italian Fascists sought to indoctrinate and mobilise rural women in order to increase agricultural production in the 1930s. See Perry Willson, *Peasant Women and Politics in Fascist Italy* [London: 2002], 53-71.

What was the overall impact of *primorrriverista* policies of Spanishization in Catalonia? In October 1929, Primo stated in an official communiqué that his policies had eradicated Catalan nationalism and awaken a deep love for Spain among the people of Catalonia.<sup>201</sup> Nine months later, General Berenguer abolished the notorious ‘decree against separatism’, arguing that the circumstances that originally led to its imposition did not exist anymore and praised the “manifest cordiality in which all regional sentiments evolve within the ideal of the unitary Patria”. In fact, nothing could be further from the truth. The dictatorial repression in Catalonia was intensive and arbitrary.<sup>202</sup> This was to alienate those sectors from which the dictatorship sought much of its support: the Church and the bourgeoisie. As a result of the repression important sectors of the middle classes and the clergy began to move towards Catalan nationalist options. Moreover, the monarchists in Catalonia, who had been strongly anti-Catalanist before the dictatorship, began to change their views and, once the dictator fell, embraced regionalism.<sup>203</sup> The suppression of political liberties led Catalan regionalists to take refuge in cultural activities. Publications in Catalan rocketed during the dictatorship: in 1923, there were 6 newspapers published in Catalan, while in 1927, 10 newspapers and 147 magazines were published in this language. By 1930, 10.2% of all books published in Spain were in Catalan.<sup>204</sup> In other words, Primo de Rivera’s policies of Spanishization put language in the front line of the dialectic between Spanish and Catalan nationalism and turned education into a political battleground. When in 1932 Catalonia was granted political autonomy, the ‘Catalanization’ of schools became the first goal of the regional government.

At the educational level, the policies of Spanishization also led to serious practical problems in teaching. The imposition of Spanish in public educational institutions was certainly welcomed in those urban areas with a high number of Castilian speakers. After all, due to the steady flow of immigrants from other Spanish regions during the first two decades of the century, many Catalan towns had witnessed a rapid growth, becoming strongholds of Spanish nationalism.<sup>205</sup> Yet, in rural Catalonia, teachers found teaching in Spanish a serious burden. In a letter to *El Magisterio*

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<sup>201</sup> The official note in Pérez, *La dictadura*, 288.

<sup>202</sup> Ucelay, “La represi6”, 208.

<sup>203</sup> José Luis de la Granja, Justo Beramendi and Pere Anguera, *La España de los nacionalismos y las autonomías* [Madrid: 2001], 79-80.

<sup>204</sup> Núñez Seixas, *Los nacionalismos*, 95.

<sup>205</sup> Enric Ucelay da Cal, “La iniciaci6 permanet: Nacionalismes radicals a Catalunya des de la Restauraci6”, *Catalunya i la Restauraci6, 1875-1923*. [Manresa: 1992], 127-134.

*Nacional*, an Aragonese *maestro* working in a village in the district of Tortosa bitterly described how he had to waste much of his lessons explaining the meaning of Castilian words, such as *lentejas* (lentils), to an amazed young audience which could hardly understand him.<sup>206</sup> In such circumstances, he considered his teaching was “anti-pedagogic” and demanded permission to use Catalan, or “at least some Catalan words”, when teaching. The Aragonese teacher was not alone in his petitions. Three months after the fall of the dictatorship, the *maestros nacionales* of Barcelona, most of them non-Catalan, called for total change of the *primorriverista* linguistic policy. They unanimously demanded, first, permission “to use regional languages in the classroom” and, second, the re-establishment of regional languages courses in the teacher training colleges.<sup>207</sup> As in the rest of Spain, in Catalonia the dictatorship failed to gain teachers’ support for its policies of nationalisation.

## CONCLUSION: THE CATHOLIC TRAP

In many ways, the *primorriverista* failure in Catalonia epitomises the regime’s inability to turn the educational system into an effective indoctrinating machine for the whole country. The regime’s educational reforms had a twofold negative effect. They alienated key groups of *primorriverista* supporters (i. e. the Church, Social Catholics, and much of the conservative urban middle-classes) and antagonized teachers, the very state servants responsible for the transmission of the National Catholic message. The *maestros*’ disaffection with the regime was the result of a combination of dictatorial systematic control and repression and, above all, the *primorriverista* failure seriously to improve schools and teachers’ material conditions. For all the *primorriverista* investment in education, funds were simply not adequate to catch up with Spanish population growth, let alone to reach the educational level of the most advanced Western European countries. As a result, teachers slowly but steadily distanced themselves from the dictatorship. Consequently, the main piece in the ideological chain between the state and children did not work efficiently. Additionally, the disaffection of teachers and school inspectors with the regime due to repression and the inquisitorial educational system created by the *primorriveristas* reinforces the argument of the ‘republicanisation’ of certain professional groups under the dictatorship.<sup>208</sup> Like many

<sup>206</sup> *El Magisterio Nacional* 8-5-1930.

<sup>207</sup> *El Magisterio Español*, 22-4-1930.

<sup>208</sup> Helen Graham, *The Spanish Republic at War, 1936-1939* [Cambridge: 2002], 18-19.

doctors, clerks and state servants, teachers and school inspectors began to consider a constitutional republic as their best hope: a non-arbitrary form of power which could protect their own professional interests.

A second factor that seriously hampered the educational system as a successful agency of nationalisation was the *primorriverista* clash with the Catholic Church. This conflict was somehow inevitable. The process of nationalisation of the masses from above required the expansion of the state educational system, something that unavoidably affected ecclesiastical interests. This put Primo in an extraordinarily difficult position, since the state's educational limitations made ecclesiastical cooperation indispensable in the *primorriverista* task of nationalisation. As a result, like Mussolini, the dictator needed to make some concessions to the ecclesiastical authorities while, at the same time, expanding the public educational system. Yet the confrontation is also extremely telling about the real nature of *primorriverismo*. As explained in Chapters 2 and 3, *primorriverista* discourse developed a sacred concept of the patria, in which the nation was placed above Catholicism and the state above the church. Thus, when the nation was perceived to be under threat, as in the case of Catalonia, confrontation with the Church became acceptable.

For all its shortcomings, the public educational system grew significantly in terms of schools and teachers during the dictatorship. By 1931, the Second Republic could benefit from the *primorriverista* reinforcement of state education. This was, however, a poisoned legacy, for the economic situation of the 1930s made the improvement of a seriously under-funded educational system a very difficult task. The Republican-Socialist coalition (1931-1933) took a similar top-down approach to the *primorriverista* in an attempt to nationalise the masses, but this time indoctrination was in democratic and secular values. The creation of a "new republican citizen" became a key goal in the first democratic government, which promoted lectures and readings of the 1931 Constitution in small towns and villages via *misiones pedagógicas* – teams of educators who travel the countryside to teach, perform plays and create schools and libraries. But financial restrictions, the revisionist policies of the period 1933-1936 and the lack of time precluded Republican-Socialist initiatives from having a significant impact.<sup>209</sup> Ideologically, it was the Francoist regime which ultimately gained from the *primorriverista* experience. Once the subordination of the Church was secured and

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<sup>209</sup> Sandie Holguín, *Creating Spaniards* [Madison: 2002], 196; Cobb, "The Republican State", 136-137.

political opposition eradicated during and after the Civil War, the formation of a totalitarian National Catholic educational system finally crystallized in the 1940s. As in the case of Primo, Franco welcomed the help of the Church with his project of 'political religion', but did not allow an ecclesiastical tutelage of his regime.<sup>210</sup>

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<sup>210</sup> Elorza, "El franquismo, un proyecto de religión política", 73-76.

## CHAPTER 6. STATE NATIONALISATION OF THE MASSES: SOMATÉN AND UNIÓN PATRIÓTICA

“...reason is not enough for the colossal endeavour of saving the people: we must light in it the flame of passion”

(Emilio Rodríguez Tarduchy)<sup>1</sup>

### INTRODUCTION

On 21 November 1923, Primo de Rivera met Mussolini for an official lunch at the *Palazzo Venezia*. In his speech, the Spanish dictator described Fascism and *primorriverismo* as parallel movements of national salvation and presented the *Somatén* and the fascist militia as twin “secular institutions of civilisation and order”. That very same day, gratefully impressed by the *Duce*, Primo proudly declared to the press that Spain would follow the fascist example.<sup>2</sup> When the official delegation returned to Spain on 1 December, Primo could see his approach to fascism had generated a great deal of expectation. At Barcelona harbour, together with the whole Catalan political elite, around 300 “blue shirts” of the *Federación Cívico Somatenista* (aka *La Tropa*) welcomed the King and the dictator with Roman salutes.<sup>3</sup> The twelve *tracista* squads followed the royal retinue through the city. The streets of Barcelona presented an atmosphere of celebration - balconies in the Ramblas displayed Spanish flags and thousands of people gathered to cheer the King and the dictator. The procession first stopped at the cathedral where Alfonso XIII and Primo were greeted by the Cardinal-Archbishop of Catalonia and all Catalan bishops before hearing a *Te Deum*. Immediately afterwards, the group headed towards the town hall. At the entrance of the San Jaime Palace the mayor welcomed the distinguished guests and the municipal band played the Spanish national anthem in the middle of a popular ovation. What followed was an hour-long military parade in which army soldiers and navy sailors marched together with the *Guardia Civil* and police forces. At three o’clock, the king and his dictator went for lunch at the Ritz Hotel, where the Catalan political, military and ecclesiastical elites awaited. In the evening, Primo and Alfonso

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<sup>1</sup> Rodríguez Tarduchy, *Psicología del Dictador*, 311-312.

<sup>2</sup> Both Primo’s speech at the Palazzo Venezia and his comments to the French newspaper *L’Information* in *ABC*, 22-11-1923.

<sup>3</sup> *El Debate*, 1-12-1923 and 2-12-1923.

XIII attended a banquet organised by general Barrera at the barracks of the Barcelona garrison. Both guests thanked the garrison for its leading “patriotic” role in the 13 September coup and promised the new regime would lead to a “new Spain”.<sup>4</sup>

Yet the main event of the royal visit was scheduled for the following day. On 2 December, a quarter of a million people gathered in Barcelona to commemorate the twentieth anniversary of the king’s coronation and to see Alfonso XIII being decorated with the *Somatén*’s “Constancy Medal”. Perfectly organised by General Barrera, the patriotic celebration was conceived as the “beginning of a historic period for the nation”.<sup>5</sup> The ceremony was meant to be the symbolic proclamation of the *Somatén* as the protector of the Spanish fatherland. Mobilisation for the event was impressive. In what was reported by the press as the biggest demonstration in Spanish history, 40,000 members of the *Somatén* came from all around Catalonia to pay tribute to the monarch and Primo.<sup>6</sup> Members of the Red Cross, the Boy Scouts, the Barcelona police (*mossos d’esquadra*), Civil Guards, the artillery “Hunters Battalion”, six aeroplanes and hundreds of children from Barcelona public and private schools waving Spanish flags were also mobilised for the ceremony. In an atmosphere of patriotic fervour, 250,000 people cheered the arrival of the monarchs and Primo to the royal tribune, while military bands played the national anthem and young students waved hundreds of Spanish flags. What followed in the next three hours - gun salutes, a military mass, patriotic speeches, a homage to the Virgin of Montserrat (patron saint of the militia), decoration of militiamen, and a parade of the 133 *somatenista banderas* (squads) - was to set a pattern for the *primorriverista* nationalist celebrations throughout the dictatorship. Over the next two days, Zaragoza and Madrid held similar celebrations to welcome dictator and king.<sup>7</sup>

The above paragraphs illustrate the *primorriveristas*’ early intentions to use the *Somatén* for pro-regime mass mobilisation and to engage vast sectors of society in nationalist rituals. When from March 1924 onwards the regime was to create the *Unión Patriótica* merging diverse right-wing groups (*La Traza* among them), the goal remained twofold. First, the formation of an official party sought a controlled mass mobilisation that could channel popular support for the dictatorship. Second, it aimed to “educate” the masses on *primorriverista* nationalist values. Thus the official militia

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<sup>4</sup> A description of events and the speeches are found in *El Debate*, 1-12-1923 and 2-12-1923.

<sup>5</sup> The words of Barrera in José Fontán Palomo, *El Somatenista español* [Barcelona: 1924], 52-55.

<sup>6</sup> The ceremony in *El Debate*, 2-12-1923 and 4-12-1923 and Fontán, *El Somatenista*, 56-70.



and the state-sanctioned party became essential agencies in both the transmission of the dictatorship's nationalist discourse to the masses and popular mobilisation through nationalist rituals.

The importance of rites and ceremonies for the *nationalisation* of the masses has been highlighted by historians and political scientists alike.<sup>8</sup> The creation of national identity responds to a complex process by which individuals identify themselves with symbols that have the power to unite and stress a sense of community.<sup>9</sup> The construction of a "national collective memory", a must in the creation of national identity, is based on historical myths. These myths are objectified in symbols which are in turn displayed in public festivals and monuments. Thus public festivals, ceremonies and national monuments were (and are) used to anchor national myths and symbols in the consciousness of the people. In addition, public festivals and ceremonies are designed to make the masses feel that they are also part of the nation and could participate in the "national experience".<sup>10</sup>

Rituals are an essential component in the creation of a community of nationalist believers and in the formation of nationalism as a "secular political religion".<sup>11</sup> The sacralization of national symbols takes place in patriotic ceremonies where the nation is endowed with sacred qualities and patriotic liturgies acquire a religious character previously reserved for the deity. As explained in the introduction, Italian and German fascists elaborated secularized religions as the political cement of the nation, which attempted to draw the people into anti-democratic political mobilisation and active participation in the national mystique as a way to foment popular consensus and social cohesion. In these new Fascist religions the role of rituals, symbolism, and sacralized rhetoric became paramount and were created in a syncretic manner, that is, incorporating and overlapping traditional Christian

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<sup>7</sup> *El Debate*, 4-12-1923

<sup>8</sup> Among the most important historical studies of ceremonies and the process of mass nationalisation are Mosse, *The Nationalization of the Masses*; idem, *Fallen Soldiers. Reshaping the Memory of the World Wars* [Oxford: 1990]; Maurice Aughlon, *Marianne into Battle. Republican Imaginery and Symbolism in France, 1789-1880*, [New York: 1981]; Gentile, *The Sacralization*; Seymour Drescher, David Sabean and Allan Sharlin (eds.), *Political Symbolism in Modern Europe* [New Brunswick & London: 1982]; E. Hobsbawm and T. Ranger (eds), *The Invention of Tradition* [Cambridge: 1983]; John Hutchinson, *Modern Nationalism* [London: 1994].

<sup>9</sup> Montserrat Guibernau, "National Identity and Modernity", in Alain Dieckhoff and Natividad Gutiérrez (eds.) *Modern Roots: Studies of National Identity* [Aldershot: 2001], 88.

<sup>10</sup> Mosse, *The Nationalization*, 6-8.

<sup>11</sup> Carlton Hayes, *Nationalism: A Religion* [New York: 1960], 136-150.

metaphors, liturgies and symbols with fascist political discourse to idealise the Nation-State.

In these processes of nationalist mobilisation the official party and the militias were to play a key role. In the cases of Italy and Germany, the official party, together with some other state institutions, acted as the mediator between the leader and the followers to transmit both discourse and symbolised myths, while at the same time providing an instrument of social control over the masses.<sup>12</sup> As shown in Chapters 2 and 3, the UP and the *Somatén Nacional* were conceived by the ideologues of the regime as having that very same role of connecting the dictator's discourse to the people and drawing the masses into an anti-democratic political mobilisation. The following pages analyse the role of the *Somatén* and the UP as state agencies of nationalisation, focusing on the patriotic rituals and ceremonies organised by them.

## THE SOMATÉN NACIONAL

### Formation

The *Somatén* was certainly not a *primorriverista* invention. As a rural militia its origins can be traced back to the Middle Ages and throughout the nineteenth century it remained an important popular organisation fighting French invaders, Carlists and Federal Republicans in the Catalan countryside. At the turn of the twentieth century, however, the *Somatén* steadily grew in Catalan urban centres as a bourgeois response to increasing working class mobilisation. In January 1919, Catalan regionalists of the *Lliga*, Spanish nationalists of the *Unión Monárquica* and *Jaimistas* joined forces and, with the support of the Barcelona financial elite, created the Barcelona *Somatén*, a civic guard (*guardia cívica*) under military supervision and integrated into the general framework of the Catalan *Somatén*. Its declared aims were protecting property, fighting the alleged Bolshevik menace, and keeping factories and public services running during strikes. By the end of 1919, employers' organisations and different conservative groups had created civic guards in Madrid, Zaragoza, Valencia, Granada and Alicante following the Barcelona *Somatén* model. In the next two years, Palma de Mallorca, Seville and San Sebastián followed suit.<sup>13</sup>

The actions of the Barcelona *Somatén* in the years before 1923 made for a real political education for the would-be *primorriverista* military elite. Generals Milans

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<sup>12</sup> Mosse, *The Nationalization*, 5-6.

del Bosch, Captain General of Catalonia (1918-1920), Martínez Anido, Civil Governor of Barcelona (1920-1922), Arlegui, Head of the Barcelona Police, and Primo de Rivera, Captain General of Catalonia (1922-1923), provided the *Somatén* with arms and military training and co-ordinated the actions of the militia during strikes. For the military authorities, the militia proved to be extremely useful in their war against organised labour. First, the *Somatén* was used as a substitute for the army to repress strikers, so the military was not compromised in the eyes of the public. Second, Martínez Anido and Arlegui incorporated some somatenistas into the army-organised *Sindicato Libre* killing squads, which contributed to an increasing number of assassinations of trade unionist leaders in Barcelona.<sup>14</sup>

Primo was delighted with the work of the *Somatén* in Barcelona and as early as March 1919 publicly demanded the extension of the Catalan militia all around Spain.<sup>15</sup> Yet the successive Liberal and Conservative governments did nothing to extend the *Somatén* to all Spanish provinces under a centralised framework. Thus Primo had to wait until he personally took power to realise his dream of a National *Somatén*. Not that he waited long once in office. The manifesto of 13 September promised the formation of the *Somatén Nacional* in a matter of hours. Primo stuck to his word and four days after the coup a royal decree extended the Catalan militia to every province of Spain and the Moroccan protectorate. As explained in Chapter 2, the reason for this was twofold. First, it was an initial defensive measure to endow the regime with a civilian militia capable of backing the military government in case it came under pressure. Second, the military directory conceived the *Somatén* as a pedagogic organisation devoted “to strengthen the spirit of citizenry”.<sup>16</sup> Primo de Rivera made no secret of it and, in the first years of the dictatorship, repeatedly stated that the *Somatén Nacional* was meant to be a real “school of citizenry” where all social classes would be indoctrinated in nationalist values.<sup>17</sup>

Extending the *Somatén* to all Spanish provinces was something other than the mere replication of the Catalan militia around the country. The *primorriverista* model in effect militarised the militia, by placing the *Somatén* under direct control of army. The 17 September Royal Decree ordered each Captain General to chose a

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<sup>13</sup> Fernando del Rey Reguillo, *Propietarios y Patronos* [Madrid: 1992], 626-682.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, 645-649.

<sup>15</sup> Rey, “Ciudadanos”, 105.

<sup>16</sup> RD 17-9-1923 in *La Gaceta*, 18-9-1923.

<sup>17</sup> See, for example, *La Nación*, 19-9-1925.

“Commander of Somatén” from among his generals.<sup>18</sup> Likewise, the regional Captain Generals had to select officers from among those in the reserve as military trainers of the local militias (*Auxiliares militares*).<sup>19</sup> The officers, in turn, were in charge of organising the local *somatenes* and naming the militia leader (*cabo primero*). This top-down approach shows Primo’s firm belief in the army as the essential institution for the creation of new agencies of mass nationalisation. The fact that the dictator took the same approach in the creation of the *delegados gubernativos* should not come as a surprise. In both cases army officers were in charge of organising the dictatorship’s “educational” network. Since the very first days of the regime, the militarization of society was understood as an integral component in the nationalisation of the masses.

Similar to the establishment of the *delegados*, Martínez Anido co-ordinated the creation of the militia from the Ministry of the Interior. During the first years of the dictatorship, the regimen’s second in command supervised the works of the Captain Generals and the *Somatén* commanders in every region and demanded civil governors to mobilise the delegates for the organisation and regular inspection of *somatenes* in small towns and villages.<sup>20</sup> Thus the delegates became the main link between the *Somatén* commanders in the cities and the rural militias. This military tutelage was to remain throughout the entire dictatorship tightly interweaving the fortunes of the *somatenes* with the actions of the delegates.<sup>21</sup>

With this hierarchical and militarised structure the *Somatén Nacional* expanded into the most recondite places of Spain in a matter of months. This development also had much to do with the different groups that initially supported the regime’s initiative. The Catholic trade unions had been part of the militias in Madrid even before the dictatorship and when the *Somatén Nacional* was established many Catholic workers joined it in other Spanish towns.<sup>22</sup> In rural areas the powerful *Confederación Nacional Católica Agraria* (CNCA) and the *Asociación Católica*

<sup>18</sup> Article 3, RD 17-9-1923.

<sup>19</sup> Article 4, RD 17-9-1923.

<sup>20</sup> A vast number of reports from captain generals of all regions to Martínez Anido on the formation of *somatenes* in AHN, Presidencia del Gobierno, Bundle 442; and Gobernación (Estado) Serie A, Bundle 59, Box .

<sup>21</sup> As late as January 1926, Martínez Anido insisted on the need of a close tutelage over the *somatenes*. See Subsecretario de Gobernación to civil governors, 27-1-1926, AGA, Interior, Bundle 149.

<sup>22</sup> For the participation of *Acción Católica* and *mauristas* see Juan José Castillo, *El sindicalismo amarillo* [Madrid: 1977], 266-273. For the involvement of Catholic trade unions in the *Somatén* see,

*Nacional de Propagandistas* (ACNP) suggested to peasants that they join the militias, a recommendation that according to the catholic press they followed *en masse*.<sup>23</sup>

Regarding the mobilisation of the masses and their integration into the *Somatén*, the reaction of the upper classes was, however, mixed. In the cities, bankers, employers, industrialists and aristocrats fully supported the idea and funded and directed the militias.<sup>24</sup> In rural areas, some of the great landowners happily jumped on the *primorriverista* wagon and formed militias as their own praetorian guards,<sup>25</sup> but most of the *caciques* saw the creation of *somatenes* as a direct challenge to their power. Javier Tusell has suggested that “the Somatenes, presumably, were in the hands of *caciquil* organisations throughout the entire dictatorial period” in Andalusia, yet no evidence is provided to back this statement.<sup>26</sup> On the contrary, archival records show that the Captain Generals were very wary about the negative impact the *caciques* might have on the formation of the *Somatén* in southern Spain. Ten days after the Royal Decree establishing the *Somatén Nacional* was published, the Captain General of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Military Region (Andalusia) wrote to Primo explaining the difficult task he was facing.<sup>27</sup> The General believed he could not organise independent militias in towns of less than 3,000 inhabitants until the councils were transformed because of the *caciques*’ control of the municipal boards. Once the governmental delegates had taken over the municipal councils in the autumn of 1923, the formation of *somatenes* began to take place in small towns and villages. In some cases, the *caciques* sought to infiltrate the militias with stooges or simply hampered the actions of those corporals opposed to *caciquil* influence, which in turn led to denunciations by members of the public sparking military investigations.<sup>28</sup> On some other occasions, however, the local bosses seem to have stepped aside and “allowed” the formation of the *Somatén* with only passive opposition. A year after the official establishment of the institution, the

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for instance, Catholic trade unions and Corporal of the *Somatén* of Alcira to Martínez Anido, 14-1-1926, AHN, Presidencia del Gobierno, Bundle 440, Box 1.

<sup>23</sup> Juan José Castillo, *Propietarios muy pobres* [Madrid: 1979], 344.

<sup>24</sup> Rosa Martínez Segarra, “Grupos económicos en el Somatén”, *Cuadernos Económicos de I. C. E.*, (1979), n. 10, 209-224.

<sup>25</sup> González & Rey, *La defensa*, 201.

<sup>26</sup> Tusell, *La crisis* [Madrid: 1977], 149.

<sup>27</sup> Captain General of the Second Military Region to Primo de Rivera, 27-9-1923, AHN, Presidencia del Gobierno, Bundle 442.

<sup>28</sup> Some cases of *caciques* accused of instigating campaigns against *somatenistas* and denunciations of *caciques*’ stooges in the local *Somatén* in reports from the *Somatén* general commander of the 7<sup>th</sup> Military Region to Primo de Rivera, 12-2-1924, AHN, Gobernación (Estado) Serie A, Bundle 59, Box 2. According to Martínez Segarra, the *caciques*’ opposition precluded a proper development of the *Somatén* in Andalusia throughout the entire dictatorship, “Grupos económicos”, 209-224.

*Somatén* General Commander of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Military Region, Antonio Fernández, complained to his Captain General about the “regretful apathy of the upper class” which did nothing to help him in creating militias.<sup>29</sup> Although the *primorriveristas* might have tolerated the presence of *caciques* in the *Somatén*, the latter seem to have been rarely in control of the militias.

The political orientation and social strata of those groups which supported the formation of the *Somatén* from the start obviously had a severely negative impact on the readiness of some other political groups and social classes to join the militia. Thus the involvement of the upper classes and conservative elements of the lower middle classes (shopkeepers and small employers) in the urban *somatenes* alienated most of the blue collar workers.<sup>30</sup> In the same manner, the support of middle and small landowners made the integration of landless peasants (*jornaleros*) an impossible task. And yet the *primorriveristas* insisted the government wanted to integrate all classes into the militia. To get this message across, every regional commander was commissioned with the creation of an official regional bulletin of the militia as an initial step into the political indoctrination of the paramilitaries. Subscription to the regional bulletins was made mandatory for all *somatenistas*, who had to pay a small fee for the membership and the funding of the publication.

The set of political values defended in the pages of the *somatenes*’ bulletins were those of nationalism, counterrevolution, Catholicism and social order, together with a bitter anti-communism and anti-Catalan nationalism. As explained in Chapter 2, these beliefs were loosely defined in a discourse that, nonetheless, led to the effective sanctification of political terms, such as patria, nation, and order, while including a veneer of pseudo-scientific vocabulary. The *Somatén’s Decalogue*, for example, described “Anarchists, paranoids, alcoholics, and effeminate people” as “mentally degenerate” and “public enemies”, thus portraying the nature of the regimen’s political opponents as subhuman and sick.<sup>31</sup> Despite the obvious political implications of these postulates, *somatenista* publications always presented the militia as non-political. Mindful of the popular perception of the *somatenes* as ideologically and personally linked to the extreme right, the paramilitaries emphasised that all ideological options were welcomed, including the “intellectual left” - the only proviso

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<sup>29</sup> *Somatén* general commander of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Region to captain general of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Region, 2-9-1924, AHN, Gobernación (Estado) Serie A, Bundle 59, Box 1.

<sup>30</sup> For working class opposition to the *Somatén* see below.

being that of supporting the regime.<sup>32</sup> Vague ideological definitions had, of course, the goal of attracting the largest possible number of members from different political backgrounds, especially the middle classes not connected with dynastic parties, the so-called *clases neutras*. But ideological vagueness is also telling of the nature of the *Somatén Nacional*. Created as a “movement of citizens”, the *primorriveristas* understood that in the regime’s militia action should precede doctrine and strength and decision should herald the ideological debate – a view much in line with the postulates of Schmitt and the fascist theoretician Giovanni Gentile.<sup>33</sup> In no other field did this combination of regime’s propaganda and mobilisation of the masses become more important than in the public ceremonies that the *Somatén* organised throughout the entire dictatorship.

### The Battle for the Public Arena: Rituals, Virgins and Parades

By autumn 1924, the regime boasted the *Somatén* had more than 175,000 members all around the country.<sup>34</sup> Yet the actions of the militias against political opponents of the regime had been almost non-existent in the year the *Somatén Nacional* had been functioning. As Primo himself acknowledged in October 1925, many wondered about the reason-to-be of the *Somatén*.<sup>35</sup> For the dictator the explanation was clear. First, the militia was a “pre-emptive medicine”, a deterrent for eventual social disorders. Second, the *Somatén* was a “school of citizenship”, what in the dictators eyes meant a device of social indoctrination via mass mobilisation. In fact, by the autumn of 1925 the *Somatén* had been mobilised to participate in every single nationalist ceremony organised by the regime since 13 September 1923. These included not only activities related to the militia (the Fiesta of the sanctification of the *Somatén* flag and celebrations for the Virgin of Montserrat), but also participation in celebrations of Spanish military victories in Morocco, ceremonies for those fallen in Cuba and the Philippines, openings of school buildings, the *Fiesta del Árbol* and all sorts of pro-regime “patriotic campaigns”.

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<sup>31</sup> “Decálogo del Somatén”, *El Somatén. Boletín Oficial del Somatén Local de Madrid*, August, 1924.

<sup>32</sup> The *somatenistas* acknowledged that because many of their members were also militants of radical-right groups the general public perceived the *Somatén* as an extreme rightwing organisation. *El Somatén*, May 1924.

<sup>33</sup> González and Rey, *La defensa*, 181.

<sup>34</sup> *Paz y Buena Voluntad. Boletín oficial de los Somatenes de la 5ª Región*, September 1924.

<sup>35</sup> *La Nación*, 18-10-1925.

During the dictatorship the *Somatén Nacional* created its own rituals, essentially developing those of the Catalan militia. The Fiesta of the sanctification of the *Somatén* flag was the foundational ritual of all militias and it was repeated on yearly bases during the annual military inspection. Whether in cities or in villages it usually followed a similar pattern everywhere. It began with a military parade of the members of the army and the local *Somatén* followed by an open air mass (*misa de campaña*). Once the mass was over, the ecclesiastical authorities blessed the *Somatén* and the Spanish flags, while the military or local band played the national anthem. The sanctification of the emblems was followed by a series of speeches delivered by the *Somatén*'s military commanders and the godmother (*madrina*) of the militia, who usually praised the paramilitaries, the war in Africa and the dictatorship at home. After the speeches, the *sometenistas* paraded in front of the authorities while the music bands played *pasodobles*.<sup>36</sup>

It is worth noting the novelty that the celebration of these fiestas had for hundreds of small towns and villages where no popular patriotic ceremony had ever taken place. True, many in the countryside might have listened to patriotic discourses emanating from the pulpit or the balcony of the town hall during the Restoration. And yet the *Somatén Nacional*'s ceremonies encouraged the active participation of local men and women as never before. The militia's parades, the speeches of the *madrinas* and the corporal of the *Somatén* were all new elements of popular participation in patriotic rituals. Further, the *primorriverista* ceremonies incorporate elements of popular culture, such as *pasodobles* and Catholic masses, designed to integrate thousands of peasants into the patriotic liturgy. For the first time, many individuals in rural Spain could identify themselves with symbols designed to stress the sense of national community and could "experience" the fatherland, with all its religious, populist and military connotations, in emotional terms.

In the cities and large towns the regime specialised in grand gatherings and parades, as a way to both indoctrinate and show mass support. In these cases, the *primorriveristas* put in practice all the experience gained in Catalonia during the years previous to the dictatorship. In the early 1920s, the Catalan elites had organised Somatenista parades to celebrate the day of the patron saint of the institution (the Virgin of Montserrat) and the oath to the militia's flags, with support of the civil and

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<sup>36</sup> See dozens of letters and telegrams from the civil governors and the *delegados* to Martínez Anido in



military authorities. In 1921, the first grand gathering took place in Barcelona, where 35,000 militiamen marched in a ceremony which included an open-air mass, blessing of the flags, interpretation of the national anthem, and popular displays of Spanish and Catalan flags. The show really gained momentum when Martínez and Arlegui, then Civil Governor and Chief Police Inspector of Barcelona respectively, paraded in an open topped car throughout the Paseo de Gracia to the delight of the public.<sup>37</sup> In the following years new parades were organised to commemorate the Virgin of Montserrat in Barcelona and Gerona. On these occasions, the recently named Captain General of Catalonia, Miguel Primo de Rivera, attended the ceremonies.<sup>38</sup> Once in power, Primo was determined not only to maintain this newly invented “tradition” but also to export it to the rest of the country.

The Royal Order of 3 November 1923 declared the Virgin of Montserrat patron saint of all *Somatenes* in Spain, as a tribute to the Catalan militia praised for its religious and “glorious Spanish tradition” and its role in combating the French during the War of Independence.<sup>39</sup> In the months to come, Primo personally encouraged the celebration of the saint patron and Martínez Anido mobilised civil governors, delegates, Captain Generals and *Somatén* Commanders to assure the success of the celebration. Already in the spring of 1924, the ceremonies were widespread throughout Spain.<sup>40</sup> In Madrid, for example, a huge altar with the figure of the Virgin of Montserrat was on display for the ceremony held in El Retiro park, where thousands of paramilitary paraded in front of the dictator.<sup>41</sup> In the following years, the Fiesta of the Virgin of Montserrat became the most important *somatenista* ceremony, frequently presided over by Primo and members of the royal family and always cautiously co-ordinated by the Ministry of the Interior.<sup>42</sup>

The regime’s promotion of the Fiesta of the Virgin of Montserrat was not gratuitous. The decision was consistent with the *primorriverista* quest for the creation

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AHN, Presidencia del Gobierno, Bundle 331, Box 1, and Bundle 442.

<sup>37</sup> Martínez Anido to Minister of the Interior, 24-4-1921, AHN, Gobernación (Estado) Serie A, Bundle 59, Box 1.

<sup>38</sup> Civil Governor of Gerona to Minister of the Interior, 1-5-1922, AHN, Gobernación (Estado) Serie A, Bundle 59, Box 1.

<sup>39</sup> RCO 3-11-1923, *CLE*, n. 496, 572-573.

<sup>40</sup> See tens of telegrams from local *somatenes* to Martínez Anido in AHN, Presidencia del Gobierno, Bundle 442.

<sup>41</sup> *El Somatén*, May 1924.

<sup>42</sup> See the correspondence of Martínez Anido with the provincial Commanders, Captain Generals and Civil Governors in AHN, Gobernación (Estado) Serie A, Bundle 59, Boxes 1 and 2; and Presidencia del Gobierno, Bundle 440.

of a “patriotic religion”. The *primorriveristas* were fully aware of the power of religion to impact on the psyche of the masses. As one of the leaders of the *Junta de Propaganda Patriótica*, Lieutenant Colonel Emilio Rodríguez Tarduchy, bluntly put it, religion was the most important factor in the transformation of the “social psychology of the mob”.<sup>43</sup> The dictatorship sought to endorse *Somatén* rituals with a strong religious flavour that in turn emphasised the sacred character of the nation. The incorporation of Christian iconography, the celebration of open-air masses, the priests’ patriotic sermons and the interpretation of the national anthem during the benediction of the *Somatén* and the Spanish flags, were all elements intended to create the feeling of a mass nationalist “communion” among the participants and the public.<sup>44</sup> As in the *primorriverista* nationalist ceremonies with soldiers and students, Catholic imaginary and rhetoric were fully integrated into civic patriotic rituals.

The decision to declare the Virgin of Montserrat as the patron saint of the *Somatén Nacional* also had more subtle objectives: it aimed at transforming the Catalanist Virgin *par excellence* into a symbol of Spanish nationalism. By the early 1920s, the cult of Monserrat was a well established ritual of Catalan regionalism and nationalism. By incorporating the Virgin into Spanish nationalism’s symbolic repertoire, Primo sought to deprive the Catalanist enemy of its own signs of identity.

The extent to which this new tradition of celebrating the Virgin of Montserrat grew roots outside Catalonia is not difficult to determine. The fiesta was celebrated throughout the entire dictatorship with the support of the state apparatus, but once the regime fell, the rapid decline of the *Somatén* and the disappearance of the celebration went hand in hand.<sup>45</sup> More importantly, the regime was unable to strip the *Moreneta* of its Catalanist connotations. During the period 1923-1930, the trend to baptise girls with the name Montserrat doubled in Catalonia.<sup>46</sup> The selection of the patron of Catalonia (and of a name that has no equivalent into Castilian) to baptise daughters has to be understood as an act of resistance by many Catalans who opposed the

<sup>43</sup> Rodríguez Tarduchy, *Psicología*, 249.

<sup>44</sup> See, for example, *El Somatén*, May 1925.

<sup>45</sup> The records of the Ministry of the Interior only show one report by a civil governor on the celebration of the Virgin of Montserrat during the Dictablanda. This marks a sharp contrast with the hundreds of reports sent every year to Martínez Anido during the dictatorship. The report dated 27-4-1930 in AHN, Gobernación (Estado) Serie A, Bundle 59, Box 2.

<sup>46</sup> The trend of baptising girls with the name Montserrat and its political implications in Serrano, *El nacimiento*, 69-73.

*primorriverista* policies of Spanishisation. The fact that the same pattern was to be repeated in Catalonia under Francoism should not come as a surprise.

Together with the Catholic features of *Somatén*'s rituals, it was the military factor which most contributed to the creation of a sacred idea of the nation at the symbolic level. In the years before 1923, the militias had developed militarised rites in the burials of comrades, where coffins were covered with the national flag, praetorian guards were installed around the coffin and collective oaths were made.<sup>47</sup> This military-religious symbiosis in the *somatenistas*' last honours was to continue during the dictatorship.<sup>48</sup> However, the drastic reduction of violent deaths in social clashes from 1924 onwards led to a sharp decline in the celebration of these funeral rites. Nevertheless, the regime used the *Somatén* ceremonies to honour those fallen for the patria in the colonial wars. Seeking to develop a cult of the dead, the *Somatén* celebrated ceremonies with veterans of Cuba and Puerto Rico and tributes to the fallen in the African fields were frequently paid as part of the militia's rituals.<sup>49</sup> Likewise, the *Somatén* was mobilised every time the government organised a public mass to honour the Spanish army.<sup>50</sup> As explained in chapter 2, masses for those fallen in Africa or to commemorate Spanish victory over Moroccan rebels became a central part of the nationalist rallies.<sup>51</sup> In these ceremonies the nation was endorsed with the Christian symbolism of death and resurrection. Like Fascist Italy, all these elements became essential ingredients for a new "patriotic religion", which placed the nation on the main altar.<sup>52</sup>

Some factors, however, acted against the successful creation of a cult of the fallen in Spain. The main problem was the unpopularity of the war in Morocco.<sup>53</sup> The fact that the official celebrations of the end of the war emphasised peace over colonial greatness illustrates to what extent the regime was aware of the difficulties of imbuing

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<sup>47</sup> Fernando del Rey, "Ciudadanos honrados y somatenistas", *Estudios de Historia Social*, (1987), n.42-43, 130.

<sup>48</sup> See, for example, the funeral tributes paid annually by the Toboso *Somatén* to its fallen members, in *El Somatén*, October 1927.

<sup>49</sup> See, for instance, the tribute paid by the Linares *Somatén* to the ex-combatants of Cuba and Puerto Rico, *El Somatén*, August 1924.

<sup>50</sup> For an account of these ceremonies see, Rubio, *Crónica* [1974], 128-129, 143-44, 157, 161.

<sup>51</sup> See, for example, the discourses of Primo and the Infante Don Fernando in front of the Monument of the Soldiers Fallen for the Fatherland on 26 January, 1925, Casa, *Dos años*, 717-718.

<sup>52</sup> For the Italian case see Gentile, *The Sacralization*, 17-18.

<sup>53</sup> See chapter 4.

the Moroccan campaign with popular jingoist fervour.<sup>54</sup> Second, Spain's neutrality in WWI had precluded the formation of groups of veterans eager to experience again the comradeship of the front and honour those fallen in the battlefields - a phenomenon found in most European countries in the 1920s.<sup>55</sup> Unlike Italy, most of the paramilitaries in the *Somatén Nacional* had neither war experience nor had they fought the trade unionists in the streets.

Primo's *Somatén Nacional* not only deviated from the Fascist militias in its lack of war ethos but also in its image. Whereas Italian and Nazi militias wore uniforms and militarised their public performances as much as possible, the *somatenistas* had no uniforms and marched without military discipline. As described by one witness, the *somatenistas* parading in Madrid in December 1923 were "excellent bourgeois, over-40 fathers, who looked more like peaceful tourists than heroic guardians of social order".<sup>56</sup> Their heterogeneous civilian clothes and peaceful image simply could not transmit "discipline and martial ideas" to the public.<sup>57</sup> This lack of martial spirit and military aesthetics certainly conditioned the initial popular reception of the *Somatén*. As the dictator acknowledged, the first *somatenista* parades were met with mockery and sneers by many in Andalusia.<sup>58</sup> Nonetheless, he refused the idea of creating a uniform for the militia. For Primo "discipline and honour" were to be the essence of the *Somatén* over any aesthetic consideration.<sup>59</sup> The decision not to give uniforms to the militias seems contradictory for a regime so eager to endow civilians with military values. But it might well have responded to the intention not to blur the external distinctions between the army and civilian militants – something that would have infuriated military officers. The army was to remain a different, superior class within the regime apparatus.

For all the initial problems the militia experienced, Primo's confidence in the *Somatén* as the best tool whereby mobilise the masses remained intact. During the first three years of his regime, the *Somatén* was to play a key role in the so-called "campaigns against bad Spaniards". These were regime-organised gatherings to show mass support for the dictatorship when criticised by the liberal opposition in exile. As

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<sup>54</sup> The celebration of victory was named the "Fiesta de la Paz". See its observance in *Unión Patriótica*, 15-10-1927 and 1-11-1927.

<sup>55</sup> Mosses, *Fallen Soldiers*, 71-106.

<sup>56</sup> Manuel Aguirre, *Glosa del año 23*, [Madrid: 1944], 314.

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*, 314.

<sup>58</sup> *La Nación*, 18-10-1925.

<sup>59</sup> *La Nación*, 18-10-1925.

early as January 1924, the dictatorship organised a parade outside the Royal Palace to honour the king and “make amends” for the “bad Spaniards” who had criticised the monarch and the regime. Representatives of all provinces, around 5,000 mayors coming from all over Spain, hundreds of Catalan *somatenistas* and 1,500 boy-scouts marched in front of Primo and Alfonso XIII. The following week Barcelona hosted yet another pro-regime celebration that was to last for three days.<sup>60</sup> As anti-*primorriverista* opposition grew among liberal intellectuals throughout 1924, so did the regime’s resolution to mobilise supporters. The publication of the republican Blasco Ibáñez’s *Por España y contra el rey* led to a new governmental campaign against the “bad Spaniards”. In December 1924, tens of *Somatenes* held parades in different towns while aristocrats and Catholic workers celebrated “patriotic” meetings to vindicate the figures of the monarch and the dictator.<sup>61</sup> In Valencia, the town council opted to change the name of Blasco Ibáñez Square.<sup>62</sup> On the 23 January 1925 Martínez Anido gathered thousands of *somatenes* from all over Spain for a grand march on the streets of Madrid in defence of the king and the nation.<sup>63</sup>

For a regime obsessed with its image abroad, these parades sought to demonstrate to the international community the popular support Primo had at home. In terms of objectives and even location (the Royal Palace in Madrid), they also bore a striking resemblance to those gatherings Francisco Franco was to organise when criticised by European democrats. For the *primorriveristas*, the patriotic campaigns were an important part of their endeavour to nationalise the masses via active participation in emotionally enhancing folkloric celebrations, in which king, dictator and nation were portrayed as the supreme good opposed to the evil of liberal-republican-Bolshevik-foreign-anti-Spanish critics. In other words, the campaigns sought to facilitate the symbolic popularisation of the Manichean views promoted by the regime at the discursive level through the active participation of the man in the street.

The nationalisation of the masses through participation in patriotic ceremonies was in absolute concurrence with the regime’s attempt to take the streets from the dictatorship’s political opponents. The “conquest” of the streets as a public political

<sup>60</sup> The parades in Madrid and Barcelona in Rubio *Crónica* [1974], 127-131.

<sup>61</sup> See telegrams of Captains Generals and *Somatén* General Commanders from diverse regions to Primo de Rivera in December 1924 and January 1925, AHN, Presidencia del Gobierno, Bundle 442.

<sup>62</sup> Rubio *Crónica* [1986], 160.

<sup>63</sup> *Paz y Buena Voluntad*, January 1925.

space was in turn part of a much more far-reaching project to monopolise the symbolic universe and, hence, gain an absolute control of political discourse. Together with military censorship, official propaganda and mandatory inclusion of Primo's official notes in all newspapers, the regime implemented a long-term symbolic repression to reduce the potential for organised protest. In the dictatorship's bid for controlling the symbolic universe it is possible to distinguish three different interrelated tactics: assimilation of the enemies' symbols, creation of new symbols and rites, and banning the iconography and rituals of the opponents. The regime attempted assimilation in the case of the Virgin of Montserrat but, as noted above, the *Moreneta* never fully made it into the sanctuary of Spanish nationalism. Some other historical myths shared by both liberals and reactionaries, such as the War of Independence, remained in dispute during the 1920s and 1930s.<sup>64</sup> Probably no other case encapsulates better the struggle for controlling the nationalist symbolic universe than the repatriation of Ángel Ganivet's body. Claimed by both liberals and conservatives as the intellectual doyen of Spanish nationalism, his burial in Madrid in 1925 ended with violent clashes between *primorriverista* supporters and opponents.<sup>65</sup>

As in many other fields, the regime proved itself more effective at destroying than at creating. The so-called "decree against separatism" of 17 September 1923 banned all regional flags and emblems from public display. Furthermore, in early September 1924, the Civil Governor of Barcelona forbade not only the celebration of the *Diada*, national day of Catalonia, but also bringing bouquets of flowers to the statue of Rafael Casanova, the Catalan national hero.<sup>66</sup> When the regime realised that intellectuals and Restoration political elites were turning their meetings into public acts of opposition, the dictatorship reacted by forbidding the events. In the Autumn of 1924, for instance, a homage to Pedro Sáinz Rodríguez, then an anti-*primorriverista* Professor of Law at the University of Madrid, was broken up by police.<sup>67</sup> Subsequent public meetings organised by liberals and conservatives to honour Eduardo Dato and Marañón were simply forbidden. The Left and anti-*primorriverista* groups of the extreme right were also kept from celebrating their rituals. The commemoration of

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<sup>64</sup> For the use of the War of Independence as a mobilising myth by both Republicans and Nationalists during the Civil War, Xose-Manoel Núñez, "Nations in arms against the invader: On nationalist discourses during the Spanish Civil War", in Chris Ealham and Michael Richards (eds.), *The Splintering of Spain. New Perspectives on the Spanish Civil War* (forthcoming) [Cambridge: 2005].

<sup>65</sup> García, *Los intelectuales*, 184-196.

<sup>66</sup> Rubio, *Crónica* [1986], 151.

<sup>67</sup> Villanueva, *La Dictadura*, 134-144.

May Day was likewise forbidden “to avoid foreign interference” in Spain, while the Ministry of the Interior constantly refused to authorise Carlist public ceremonies.<sup>68</sup>

In terms of inventing new symbols and rituals, the *primorriveristas* were less creative. Symbols that represented the nation - the flag and the anthem - remained unchanged. The symbolic unity of the militias was not achieved until January 1930, two weeks before the collapse of the regime.<sup>69</sup> Notwithstanding the fact that some new celebrations were created, (the *Día del libro español* and the *Fiesta del soldado*), the regime mainly re-elaborated existing ceremonies emphasising their military and nationalist features. The cases of the *Fiesta del Árbol* and the *somatenista* celebrations provide good examples of rites which changed their meaning under the dictatorship - shifting from the celebration of the local community to the national one. The relevance of this “re-invention of traditions” lay in its magnitude and geographical extension. The fact that the regime expanded regional ceremonies to the national level with the support of the state apparatus led to the multiplication of patriotic rituals all around Spain. To what extent these “new” rites were to be effective in terms of mass nationalisation very much depended on the official agencies’ ability to integrate and mobilise different social classes into the *primorriverista* nationalist ideal.

### Problems, reforms and fall

The idea of integrating all social classes into the *Somatén Nacional* proved a difficult task from the start. For an institution that in the pre-*primorriverista* era had specialised in fighting trade unionists in the streets and supplying the services interrupted by industrial actions its appeal to the working class had to be limited. Before September 1923, dozens of trade unions had demanded to the government the dissolution of the *Somatén* in Catalonia, arguing that its existence effectively legalised the “arming of a conflicting class in the social struggle”.<sup>70</sup> Some others on the extreme Left opted for more direct action. For instance, in April 1923 trade unionists

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<sup>68</sup> Some examples of the prohibition of Carlist ceremonies in San Sebastián, Barcelona and Zaragoza in 1924 and the closing down of Carlist associations in Valencia in 1928 in AHN, Gobernación, Serie A, Bundle, 40. On May Day see Rubio, *Crónica* [1974], 141.

<sup>69</sup> The regulation of *Somatén Nacional*’s flags and official emblems in RCO 17-1-1930, *CLE*, 1930, n.13, 42.

<sup>70</sup> Telegram of Gerona railwaymen to the Ministry of the Interior, 25-6-1923. This and tens more trade union petitions to dismantle the *Somatén* in Catalonia in AHN, Gobernación (Estado), Serie A, Bundle 59, Box 1.

exploded a car-bomb during the celebration of the Virgin of Montserrat parade in Barcelona.<sup>71</sup>

The extension of the *Somatén* to the whole of Spain did little to improve the relationships between the militiamen and the working class. For all the support of the minority Catholic trade unions and the *Sindicato Libre*, the few working class men who decided to join the militia were often scorned, ostracised and threatened by fellow workers.<sup>72</sup> The situation deteriorated so quickly that by September 1924 the government decided to implement special measures against those mocking or intimidating *somatenistas*.<sup>73</sup> Nonetheless, the legal protection of paramilitaries threatened by members of the public was to no avail. Mockery, threats and retaliations against *somatenistas* continued to be carried out not only by workers in industrial cities but also by members of the lower classes in rural areas.<sup>74</sup> In the village of Catrocalbón, for instance, a great scandal broke out when two locals openly insulted the *somatenistas* during a public ceremony, “uttering notoriously vulgar remarks about the mothers of the militiamen”, yet no action seems to have been taken against them.<sup>75</sup>

Scorn for the *Somatén* can be explained in terms of class struggle, but most of the popular contempt for the institution has to be understood in relation to the continual abuses of power carried out by the paramilitaries. The establishment of the *Somatén Nacional* provided a golden opportunity for many “free-riders” to pursue personal economic gains and/or advance their position in the local political arena. Soon the *Somatén* general commanders had to expel paramilitaries from the institution for a variety of reasons, including pressing false charges, business fraud, indiscriminate

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<sup>71</sup> Chief Police Constable to Director of General Security. 24-4-1923, AHN, Gobernación (Estado), Serie A, Bundle 59, Box 1.

<sup>72</sup> See the reports sent by the *Somatén* General Commander of the 1<sup>st</sup> Military Region, General Dabán, to Martínez Anido, 7-7-1924, denouncing various threats made by socialists to those workers who had joined the *Somatén* in the region. See also *Somatén* General Commander of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Military Region to Martínez Anido, 2-9-1924, describing workers’ threats and their demands to sack those skilled workers who were affiliated to the *Somatén* in Jerez and Seville. AHN, Gobernación (Estado), Serie A, Bundle 59, Box 1.

<sup>73</sup> Article 1, RD 8-9-1924, *CLE*, (1924), n. 398, 608.

<sup>74</sup> See, among others, the case of Celso Benito Salinas, a Valladolid metal worker, who claimed he had been sacked due to a campaign of false accusations initiated by fellow workers when they found out he belonged to the *Somatén*. Celso Benito Salinas to Minister of Interior, 15-10-1927. AHN, Gobernación (Estado), Serie A, Bundle 59, Box 2.

<sup>75</sup> For the incident in Catrocalbón see AHN, Presidencia del Gobierno, FFCC, Bundle 199, Box 2. More cases of threats to *Somatén* members in villages in 1925 in AHN, Presidencia del Gobierno, Bundle 442.



beating-ups, and using the *somatenista* card while drunk.<sup>76</sup> In some rural areas, *somatenistas* organised criminal networks. As the civil governor of Albacete wrote to Martínez Anido, many *somatenistas* in the province were charging local peasants for crossing paths and roads in the name of “imaginary laws”, while some others simply “shot and robbed” travellers and locals alike.<sup>77</sup> This situation, the civil governor observed, had led to the *Somatén*’s loss of prestige and was seriously hampering the possibility of integrating many citizens, “supporters of the current regime”, into the militia. Despite their illegal behaviour, the regime was always extremely lenient with paramilitary criminals. In the spring of 1927, the dictatorship declared an amnesty for all *somatenistas* convicted of lesser crimes, providing the latter were not against property. This measure marked a sharp contrast with the arbitrary and indiscriminate political and social repression of the dictatorship and led to further popular hostility not only against the *Somatén* but against the dictatorship as a whole.<sup>78</sup>

Economic factors were to play their part too in the *Somatén*’s shortcomings as an agency of mass nationalisation. Some Captain Generals found the *Somatén*’s mandatory annual fee a serious obstacle in their efforts to recruit paramilitaries. In January 1924, the General Commander of the 7<sup>th</sup> Region proposed temporarily to cancel the fees and to supply weapons free of charge to facilitate the recruitment of the lower classes.<sup>79</sup> The following year, the *Somatén* Committee of the 7<sup>th</sup> Region approved a reduction of the money devoted to *Somatén Auxiliares militares*, owing to the captaincy’s dire straits.<sup>80</sup> In 1928 the issue of the membership dues was again at stake. The General Commander of the 6<sup>th</sup> Region, Ramón Delgado, alerted Rodríguez Tarduchy that among “the rural population, especially in Castile, the compulsory payment of the fees was leading many affiliates to resign and would eventually end the life of the Institution in many towns”.<sup>81</sup> Delgado advocated an outright abolition

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<sup>76</sup> The cases mentioned above in *El Somatén*, December, 1924. For economic sanctions imposed on *Somatén* Corporals due to “some misdemeanours” see the General Commander of the 1<sup>st</sup> Region to Martínez Anido, 22-10-1925, AHN, Gobernación (Estado), Serie A, Bundle 59, Box 1 and 2. See, for instance, the confrontation between the mayor and the *Somatén* Corporal of Canillejas (Madrid). The problem originated when the Corporal insisted in attending bullfights as part of the “local security forces”, which was considered by the mayor a mere excuse not to pay for the show. Dirección General de Seguridad to Martínez Anido, 6-7-1928, AHN, Gobernación (Estado), Serie A, Bundle 59, Box 2.

<sup>77</sup> Civil Governor of Albacete to Martínez Anido, 31-5-1927, AHN, Gobernación (Estado), Serie A, Bundle 59, Box 2.

<sup>78</sup> González & Rey, *La defensa*, 201-202.

<sup>79</sup> General Commander of the 7<sup>th</sup> Region to Primo de Rivera, January 1924, AHN, Presidencia, Bundle 442, Box 1.

<sup>80</sup> General Commander of the 7<sup>th</sup> Region to Primo de Rivera, 6-7-1925, AHN, Presidencia, Bundle 442.

<sup>81</sup> Ramón Delgado to Rodríguez Tarduchy, 2-6-1928, AHN, Presidencia, Bundle 441, Box 1.

of the annual dues, for it was enough for the man in the street to volunteer to carry out his “citizen virtues”. And yet the first proposals coming from the commission gathered by Primo to carry out the reform of the *Somatén* advocated increasing taxes on gun licences as the way to finance the militia.<sup>82</sup> At the core of this problem, as in every *primorriverista* agency of nationalisation, lay the state’s incapacity to properly fund the institutions designated to transmit national identity to the masses.

Economic problems, erosion of the militia’s public image and the 1926 conspiracies against the dictatorship convinced Primo of the need to reform the *Somatén Nacional*. The militia’s inaction during the Sanjuanada and Prats de Molló rebellions drew the ire of the dictator. After all, the institution had been created for the defence of the regime and these were the first two occasions when the dictatorship was directly challenged. In September 1927, the formation of a *Somatén* National Council was announced and in May 1928 a military commission was created to draft a blueprint of the new militia’s statute. Compelled by regional Commanders’ reports denouncing *somatenistas*’ abuses of authority, the commission tried to balance the paramilitaries “excesses” by clarifying the duties and rights of the members.<sup>83</sup> The main objective was, however, to expand the militia and to increase its effectiveness, so the draft handed to Primo for approval in September 1928 included the formation of a women’s *Somatén* and granted new privileges to the institution, such as the confidentiality of *Somatén* informers and the acquisition of military force legal status when on duty.<sup>84</sup> In December 1929 the new regulation of the *Somatén* finally turned law. It granted the militia those concessions that the *somatenistas* had been demanding – freedom from arrest unless they committed a flagrant crime and from being jailed before trial - and elevated the paramilitaries’ status to that of secret state police.<sup>85</sup>

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<sup>82</sup> Rodríguez Tarduchy to Fernando Flórez, *Somatén* General Commander of the 1<sup>st</sup> Military Region, “Modificaciones y aclaraciones más importantes que con relación al Reglamento actual de Somatenes se hace constar en él confeccionada por la Comisión designada a tal fin por la Presidencia del Consejo de Ministros”, AHN, Presidencia, Bundle 441, Box 1.

<sup>83</sup> Reports on *somatenistas* abuses in Captain General of the 5<sup>th</sup> Region, Arturo Lezcano, to Presidencia del Gobierno, 10-8-1927; *Somatén* General Commander of the Canary Islands to Fernando Flórez, 21-6-1928, AHN, Presidencia, Directorio Militar, Bundle 441, Box 2. For the Commission’s comments see Rodríguez Tarduchy to Fernando Flórez, *Somatén* General Commander of the 1<sup>st</sup> Military Region, “Modificaciones y aclaraciones”, AHN, Presidencia, Directorio Militar, Bundle 441, Box 1.

<sup>84</sup> A copy of the document with Primo’s hand-written final corrections dated September 1928 in AHN, Presidencia, Directorio Militar, Bundle 441, Box 2.

<sup>85</sup> See the project presented by Primo to his ministers, “Proyecto presentado al consejo de Ministros”, 26-12-1929, AHN, Presidencia, Directorio Militar, Bundle 441, Box 2; and “Reglamento de la Institución de Somatenes Armados de España”, RD 31-12-1929, *CLE*, 1929, Appendix 19, 1-36.

By the time the new regulations were implemented the *Somatén* had been undergoing a radical modification for almost a year. The insurrections of Valencia and Ciudad Real in early 1929 made the dictator realise that he could not count on UP and *Somatén* mobilisation to defend his regime.<sup>86</sup> In Valencia and Ciudad Real, the local *Somatenes* stayed at home when the rebellion broke and it was down to the army to put the insurrection down. Furthermore, the intensification of the students' revolt made it clear that the opposition was retaking the streets from the *Somatén*. In terms of political socialisation and nationalisation, the *Somatén*'s apathy is extremely significant. Unlike Mussolini, Primo was unable to mobilise the militia and the party when the dictatorship was in trouble.<sup>87</sup> This shows not only a much lower level of political commitment to the regime of the Spanish paramilitaries than that demonstrated by the *fasci*, but also less popular support.

Nevertheless, under growing political pressure, Primo decided to turn the *Somatén* and the UP into espionage and police institutions. The Royal Decree of 4 February 1929 bestowed the party and the militia with "additional functions of vigilance and information" and called upon the *Somatén* for a further intervention in political repression.<sup>88</sup> Among the new measures, the regime created the "Citizens' Investigation and Information Centres" (centres for political denunciations made by the public) under UP control, organised an espionage network whereby the *Somatén* Corporal of every "district, village or neighbourhood" was to collect information and establish databases of political opponents at the local headquarters of the party and the militia, and authorised the paramilitaries and UP affiliates to carry out searches in the homes of those suspected of opposing the regime.<sup>89</sup> Moreover, the *somatenistas* were encouraged to use violence against those compromising "public order" and authorised closing down those associations in which "political debates" were taking place.<sup>90</sup>

There can be little doubt that these measures marked a qualitative drive towards semi-totalitarian positions by the dictatorship.<sup>91</sup> Party, militia, security forces and army were inter-linked in the service of *primorriverista* repression in what constituted the *de facto* creation of a police state. The distinction between public and private

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<sup>86</sup> Calvo Sotelo, *Mis Servicios*, 226.

<sup>87</sup> Tarchi, *Fascismo*, 146-148.

<sup>88</sup> Exposition and article 4, RD 4-2-1929, in *El Somatén*, February, 1929.

<sup>89</sup> Article 3 RD 4-2-1929 and Article 5, RCO 8-2-1929, Additional Disposition, *El Somatén*, February 1929; RCO, 16-4-1929, *CLE*, n. 147, 86-87.

<sup>90</sup> RCO 8-2-1929, Additional Disposition; RCO, 16-4-1929.

<sup>91</sup> González Calleja, "La defensa armada del 'orden social'", 104.

political spheres became blurred as paramilitaries were encouraged to invade the homes and organisations of political opponents. In terms of the *Somatén*'s public image, the consequences of the regime's radicalisation were catastrophic. Not surprisingly, the regime's "blank cheque" to the militia led to more abuses of authority, an increasing number of anonymously made false accusations, and *en masse* imprisonments of political adversaries.<sup>92</sup> The slight but steady decline in the number of affiliates throughout 1929 is telling of the counter-productive effects of the *primorriverista* totalitarian drive.<sup>93</sup> The fall of the regime in January 1930 did nothing but accelerate *Somatén* disintegration. Accusations of impunity and abuses of authority were made in the press and dozens of demands to disarm the militias poured into the Minister of the Interior's desk.<sup>94</sup> Fully aware of its ideological and political connotations, the provisional Republican government abolished the *Somatén*, except in Catalonia, the day after it took power. The decree of 15 April 1931 justified the dissolution of the *Somatén Nacional* on the grounds of the militia's lack of popular support, the paramilitaries' abuses and the threat to the social order that the institution posed.<sup>95</sup>

In no other place was the negative effect of the *Somatén Nacional* more evident than in Catalonia. Since the beginning of the dictatorship the number of *somatenistas* had consistently decreased in the region, falling from 65,735 members in September 1923 to 62,850 in August 1928.<sup>96</sup> By 1929, the decrease in popular support of the militia was also obvious in terms of street celebrations. In a letter to Primo, General Barrera acknowledged that only 22,000 *somatenistas* took part in the 1929 street

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<sup>92</sup> For example, Emilio Casado Escobedo to Martínez Anido, 1-5-1929. Casado complained of the fact that he and 90 other people had been jailed without charges for more than two weeks. A similar case in Manuel Ríos to Martínez Anido, 19-10-1929. Ríos demanded the release of some prisoners, "neither political nor dangerous", who had been jailed in Barcelona for three months without charges. For examples of false accusations see Civil Governor of Valencia to Martínez Anido, 2-12-1929. All correspondence in AHN, Gobernación (Estado), Serie A, Bundle 59, Box 2.

<sup>93</sup> The records of membership of the *Somatén Nacional* in the last years of the dictatorship are incomplete. However, all the data available shows a decrease in the number of affiliates to the institution. The 1<sup>st</sup> Military Region had 22,768 *somatenistas* in August 1928 and 22,492 in 1929. The 7<sup>th</sup> Military Region had 19,703 *somatenistas* on 31-1-1929, while 12 months later the figure had dropped to 18,985. Data in González and Rey, *La defensa armada*, 334, 336. See also the reports of regional Captaincies in December 1929 to Primo de Rivera, indicating a decrease in membership, AHN, Presidencia del Gobierno, FFCC, Bundle 199, Box 2. Martínez Segarra, *El Somatén*, 277, also reckons a sharp drop in the numbers of *somatenistas* in the last years of the dictatorship: from a total number of 56,103 militiamen in the years 1927-1928 to 22,492 in 1930.

<sup>94</sup> Some accusations after the fall of the regime in AHN, Gobernación (Estado), Serie A, Bundle 59, Box 2. More cases in Martínez Segarra, *El Somatén*, 353-356.

<sup>95</sup> Decree, 15-4-1931, *Gaceta* 16-4-1931.

<sup>96</sup> González and Rey, *La defensa*, 335.

march in Barcelona - a reduction of almost 50% when compared to the parades of December 1923. Fernando del Rey has explained this decline in the number of Catalan *somatenistas* as a by-product of the down-turn in social clashes in Barcelona during the dictatorship.<sup>97</sup> While certainly a key factor, the reduction of strikes and street fighting does not explain by itself the drop in membership. It was the transformation of the militia into an agency of Spanish nationalisation and the *primorriverista* control of the institution that alienated many from the *Somatén*. From 1924, as part of the Catalan oligarchy distanced itself from the dictatorship, the support for the institution began to decrease. More importantly, Primo's mistrust of the rural *somatenes*, always under suspicion of harbouring Catalanist feelings, led General Barrera to carry out a purge of suspected Catalanist members in the militia, which certainly hampered the popular backing of the *primorriverista Somatén*.<sup>98</sup>

Few documents epitomise better the level of popular alienation produced by the *primorriverista Somatén* than the collectively drafted letter sent by the mayors of the Falset constituency in Tarragona to the new republican Minister of the Interior in September 1931. The mayors demanded the abolition of the *Somatén* in Catalonia, for the dictatorship had perverted the institution's original "dignified local Catalan spirit" and turned the militia into a "vulgar tragi-comedy performed by a bunch of gunmen", servile to dictator and king.<sup>99</sup> In the view of the mayors:

"It is well-known that in the last eight years [the *Somatenes*] acted with a totally inverted morality. Thus, instead of a citizens' institution in defence of the Catalan people, it turned into its quasi-executioner, giving unconditional help and resolute collaboration to those who vexed, trampled on and tried by all means to humiliate the most intimate and respectable aspects of the citizen's consciousness and Catalan sentiments."

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<sup>97</sup> Rey "Ciudadanos honrados", 113.

<sup>98</sup> In a letter to Magaz, 5-6-1925, Primo wrote he had confidence in the political situation of the *Somatén* in Catalonia, "for General Barrera visited them constantly". Still, Primo showed some concerns about the political "mood" of the *somatenes* in remote towns and proposed sending the *Somatén* General Commander to check their political views under the pretext of a military review. The letter in Armñán, *Epistolario*, 141-142.

<sup>99</sup> Collective letter of the mayors of the district of Falset (Tarragona) to the Minister of Interior, 3-9-1931, in AHN, Gobernación (Estado), Serie A, Bundle 59, Box 2.

The *primorriverista* attempt to ‘de-Catalanise’ the *Somatén* seems to have been successful, yet at a very high price, as popular contempt for the institution grew in rural Catalonia during the dictatorship. The picture was no better in some other Spanish regions. The avalanche of public accusations against members of the *Somatén* in 1930 illustrates the deep grievances produced by the institution. During the first months of the Second Republic, socialist associations demanded the total disarmament of the individuals who had belonged to the *Somatén*, arguing they posed a danger to the newly established democratic system.<sup>100</sup> The link between the institution and *primorriverista* anti-democratic values did not escape anyone. Contemporary observers also understood the failure of the *Somatén* as a state-controlled “pedagogic” agency. As the conservative Gabriel Maura noted in 1930, “the state cannot produce citizens like it coins money, but it can educate and train them; and to that effect, a tidy exercise of liberties is considerably better than the *somatenista* tactic.”<sup>101</sup> An institution created to indoctrinate the masses in the nationalist ideal had ended up dividing the population. As in the case of the delegates, the paramilitary combined the role of propagandists and repressors in the same figure, which certainly undermined popular acceptance. Like the *delegados*, the *Somatén Nacional* was the creation of a military state whose fate was interwoven with the fortunes of the regime. Once the dictatorship faced its final crisis in 1929, the disgrace of the militia went hand in hand with the discrediting of the authoritarian idea of Spain promoted by the *Somatén*.

## UNIÓN PATRIÓTICA

### Formation and objectives

The warm welcome the squads of the *Federación Cívico Somatenista* (FCS) gave to Primo and the king in Barcelona in December 1923 should not come as a surprise. The leaders of the pro-fascist group had held conversations with Primo and Martínez Anido in late October seeking to turn the FCS into the regime’s official party and were eager to show the dictator that they had the capacity to mobilise

<sup>100</sup> Various petitions of arms decommission in AHN, Gobernación (Estado), Serie A, Bundle 59, Box 2.

<sup>101</sup> Maura Gamazo, *Al servicio de la Historia*, vol. 1, 60.

popular support.<sup>102</sup> Captivated by Fascist Italy, Primo initially seemed delighted with the idea of having the FCS as his main power base to build a *primorriverista* nationwide party. The *tracistas* were well connected with the military officers of the Barcelona garrison and had shown their devotion for the regime since its very beginnings. However, the dictator soon changed his mind. In late January 1924, a new meeting of the dictator with the *tracistas* did not lead to the creation of the official party desired by Primo.<sup>103</sup> The FCS might have had supporters, if only a few, in Barcelona, but it was virtually unknown outside the Catalan capital. The grand ambition of creating an official party able to mobilise all sectors of society required a further amalgamation of conservative groups. When the UP was finally created in Barcelona in April 1924, the “blue shirts” of the FCS were included, but so were the members of the Unión Monárquica Nacional (UMN) and many others ranging from former liberals to moderate regionalists.<sup>104</sup>

Seeking to gain broad social support for his official party, Primo turned to the Social Catholics. Since early November 1923, *El Debate* had begun to question the effectiveness of the FCS as the basis for the eventual official party, for the *tracistas* had virtually no popular support outside Catalonia.<sup>105</sup> At the same time, Ángel Herrera had formed a commission with the specific goal of founding a new party that would mobilise social support for the regime.<sup>106</sup> On 30 November 1923 members of the *Acción Católica Nacional de Propagandistas* (ACNP) and the *Partido Social Popular* created the *Unión Patriótica Castellana* in Valladolid, as an alternative candidate to become the dictatorship’s party.<sup>107</sup> In the following weeks new *Uniones Patrióticas* were created throughout northern Castile. In April 1924, Primo decided to unify the Social Catholic political movement and turned the UP into the official party. The implications of the choice were clear: by opting for the Social Catholics over the pro-fascist members of the FCS, the dictator aimed at benefiting from the already proven propagandists’ capacity to mobilise masses and, hence, to integrate large sectors of society into the *primorriverista* project.

Events would prove the validity of Primo’s judgement. Throughout 1924, the members of the *Confederación Nacional Católica Agraria* (CNCA), such as Gil

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<sup>102</sup> *El Debate*, 31-10-1923; 3-11-1923.

<sup>103</sup> González Calbet, *La Dictadura*, 131.

<sup>104</sup> For the different groups in the Barcelona UP see Ucelay da Cal, Enric, “La represió”, 170-172.

<sup>105</sup> *El Debate*, 3-11-1923.

<sup>106</sup> González Calbet, *La Dictadura*, 131.

Robles, mobilised its affiliates and founded tens of *Uniones Patrióticas* in both Castiles.<sup>108</sup> Granting the initiative to the Social Catholics did not mean, however, that the regime renounced to its customary top-down approach when it came to the creation of institutions. As in the case of the formation of the *Somatén Nacional*, Primo instructed civil governors and *delegados* to set up the dictatorship's institution. On 5 April 1924 a circular letter of the President of the Military Directory encouraged the delegates to devote all their efforts to the creation of the UP and, three weeks later, Primo openly suggested the *delegados* should "invite citizens to organise the new party, constituting local and provincial juntas".<sup>109</sup> As on many other occasions, the work of the delegates seems to have been patchy when it came to create new institutions. In August 1924, the Ministry of the Interior sent new guidelines for the formation of the UP in all provinces, emphasising the need to intensify the propagandist effort and be vigilant of those "old politicians" trying to infiltrate the party. The guidelines established a system in which governmental authorities would set up local organisational commissions including members of all social classes. These commissions were to elect a local committee, which in turn was to send representatives to the District Committee (*Comité del partido judicial*). Finally, the District Committee members were to choose delegates for the Provincial Committee, the top institution ultimately responsible to the soon to be created UP National Council in Madrid.<sup>110</sup>

Two points are significant in the official guidelines. First, the absence of regional committees in the UP pyramidal framework was very much in line with the regime's idea of the Spanish nation-state. By emphasising the direct links between the province and the state, the idea of regional representation was bypassed, thus underpinning the very notion of region. Second, and more importantly, the governors were endowed with the power of imposing or removing any person from any committees, while all mayors were named directors (*vocales*) of their respective UP district committee. In this manner, the top-down approach to the establishment of the UP led to the entanglement of the party with the state structure.

The *primorriverista* choice of the Social Catholics as the main organisation on which to build the UP and the process of incorporating the party to the state apparatus

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<sup>107</sup> *El Debate*, 2-12-1923; 7-12-1923.

<sup>108</sup> Castillo, *Propietarios*, 344. See also Ben-Ami, *Fascism*, 127.

<sup>109</sup> Primo de Rivera to civil governors and delegates, 25-4-1924, in Casa Ramos, *Dos años*, 546-549.



were to have obvious consequences in attracting membership from certain social backgrounds. Those provincial middle and lower-middle classes affiliated to the organisations controlled by the ACNP, such as the CNCA and *Acción Católica*, joined the UP *en masse* during the years 1924 and 1925.<sup>111</sup> State and municipal public officers constituted the second largest group in the party's rank and file becoming an important contingent of support for the regime. Finally, for all the apparent restrictions that the delegates had to impose to those related to the "old regime" wanting to become UP militants, many under the political control of the old *caciques* were allowed to join the party. This clearly seems to have been the case in rural provinces with a strong *caciquil* tradition, such as Huelva or Cáceres, which had the highest number of members in Spain.<sup>112</sup>

It is important to note that for all the Social Catholic organisational and human contribution to the formation of the party, the ideological tenets of the UP were based on the principles of military nationalism. Most significantly, the Castilian regionalism so latent in the founding manifesto of the *Unión Patriótica Castellana* of November 1923 was to fade away totally once the dictatorship took over the party.<sup>113</sup> Ideologically, as in many other fields, the military was calling the shots. As in the case of the Somatén, the *primorriveristas* initially presented vaguely defined values of patriotism, tradition and order as the ideological guidelines of the UP, seeking to attract the largest number of militants. The regime always insisted all ideologies and classes were welcomed in the UP. As in the case of the militia, there was a genuine attempt by the *primorriverista* to integrate the lower-class into the state-controlled party.<sup>114</sup> Much in the same way as Mussolini and his Fascist party, Primo presented the UP as an "anti-party", as a "league", as "movements of citizens", aiming at differentiating the organisation from traditional political parties.<sup>115</sup> After all, the UP was meant to be a radically new political organisation. First, the UP was created to

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<sup>110</sup> "Instrucciones para la organización de la Unión Patriótica", in *ibid.*, 654-656.

<sup>111</sup> Martín Sánchez-Juliá, *Ideas claras* [Madrid: 1959], 793.

<sup>112</sup> Huelva had 97,750 militants in 1927. This means that 28.30% of the province's population was affiliated to the party. Cáceres had 93,120 militants (20.9% of the population). These are astonishing figures when compared to the 60,000 militants of Barcelona (3.78% of the population). Data in Gómez-Navarro, *El régimen*, 232-236.

<sup>113</sup> "Manifiesto regionalista en Valladolid", *El Debate*, 2-12-1923.

<sup>114</sup> For the interclass and multi-ideological character of the party see the Madrid UP manifesto of early 1924, in Mask, *Hacia*, 139-156. Primo himself emphasised in a letter to the provincial UP leaders the need for keeping vague ideological principles to facilitate the affiliation of citizens with diverse political views. Primo's letter, November 1925, in Rubio, *Crónica*, [1974], 168-169.

legitimise the perpetuation of an illegal regime.<sup>116</sup> The party was to be living proof of the dictatorship's popular support, that is, Primo sought a 'populist' legitimacy as a 'substitute' for the legal legitimacy that he never won at the ballot box. The idea put forward by some historians that Primo decided to perpetuate himself in power by the end of 1925 is clearly at odds with the fact that the dictator created the UP in early 1924.<sup>117</sup> Second, the "pedagogic" aspect of all *primorriverista* agencies was also present, conceiving the UP as a "school of citizenry". As the ideologues of the regime acknowledged, the means to achieve these goals was to mobilise the masses following the Italian example.<sup>118</sup> To what extent this mobilisation was to be effective heavily depended on the structure and resources the regime was to endow the party with.

### Party structure and propaganda machinery

Setting up the official party posed a series of difficulties to civil governors and delegates alike. To begin with, some *caciques* opposed the creation of an alternative power base in their constituencies and used their political connections to hamper the creation of the UP.<sup>119</sup> On the other hand, many *caciques* saw the creation of the UP as a golden opportunity to jump onto the *primorriverista* wagon and many of them managed to gain control of local branches of the UP. Whether this was due to the delegate's lack of knowledge of the local political arena or out of mere necessity in the absence of political personnel unconnected to the *caciquil* system is difficult to determine. Whatever the reason, it seems that in many rural areas the delegates had to choose between two rival factions when creating the UP, which effectively meant handing a blank cheque to one of the groups to chase its opponents under the dictatorship's official umbrella.<sup>120</sup>

The poor results obtained by the civil governors in the spring and summer of 1924 led Martínez Anido to intensify the pressure on the delegates. In August the above mentioned guidelines for the formation of UP branches were sent to the civil

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<sup>115</sup> "Instrucciones del Señor Presidente a los gobernadores civiles, corporaciones provinciales y municipales y Uniones Patrióticas", *Unión Patriótica*, 15-2-1927.

<sup>116</sup> Ucelay, "La represión", 162-163.

<sup>117</sup> For Primo deciding to perpetuate the dictatorship in late 1925, Enrique Guerrero Salom, "La dictadura de Primo de Rivera y el Corporativismo", *Cuadernos Económicos de ICE* (1979), n. 10, 126. In the same vein Tusell, *La crisis*, 50.

<sup>118</sup> Pemán, *El hecho*, 25-26.

<sup>119</sup> This was the case of Manuel Burgos y Mazo, a *cacique* in the province of Huelva, who opposed the creation of the UP and used the municipal judge of La Palma del Condado to frustrate the governmental delegate's actions. Tusell, *La crisis*, 78, 136-137.

<sup>120</sup> Carlos Blanco, *La Dictadura y los procesos militares* [Madrid: 1931], 119-120.

governors and in October the first delegates were dismissed for failing to rally support for the party in their districts.<sup>121</sup> The link between the delegates and the party, although initially presented as temporary, was never totally broken by the regime. Documents from the Ministry of the Interior show that Martínez Anido continued to monitor the activities of the party throughout the dictatorship. As late as 1929, civil governors, delegates and UP *jefes* alike were reporting to the Ministry of the Interior and *Presidencia del Gobierno* different problems the party faced on a regular basis.<sup>122</sup> In the long run, the UP subordination to the delegates was to have an important negative effect in terms of public acceptance, for when the delegates fell into disgrace in the eyes of the people, this was going to have a knock on effect on the public's appreciation of the party.

In the cities, the regime's attempt to integrate diverse political groups and social classes led to a series of problems. In Barcelona, the formation of the UP brought together members of the so-called "military party" (the pro-fascist of the FCS, *mauristas*, former republicans and military officers of the Barcelona garrison), the UMN and many Carlists. Although all these groups were all Spanish nationalists they differed on the political framework that they wanted for Catalonia. While the "military party" opposed any regional institutions and defended a provincial structure for Spain, the Carlists and the members of the UMN still considered the *Mancomunitat* as a valid organisation once it had been purged of Catalanists. The result was a struggle for power within the UP in Barcelona and Gerona throughout 1924 that culminated in the suppression of the *Mancomunitat* and the victory of the "military party" in the spring of 1925, but that also weakened the support of the upper-classes of the UMN for the official party from its early stages.<sup>123</sup> In Bilbao, the Basque oligarchy represented in the *Liga de Acción Monárquica* simply refused to merge with the UP. Thus the official party that emerged in Vizcaya was basically run by middle-class members with no previous political experience, as was the case in

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<sup>121</sup> See for example the case of Antonio Baeza Borrás, delegate of La Carolina, who was suspended from his duties in October 1924 after the civil governor accused him of incompetence for not properly organising the UP in his district. AHN, Presidencia, FFCC, Bundle 202, Box 2, File 14986. Another delegate dismissed for not sufficiently increasing the number of members of the local UP was Commander Groizar, delegate of Alcázar de la Roda (Albacete), in October 1925. See Martínez Anido to Civil Governor of Albacete, 2-10-1925, AHN, Gobernación, FFCC, Serie A, Bundle 17 A, Box 2.

<sup>122</sup> Many of these reports from 1927, 1928 and 1929 in AHN, Presidencia del Gobierno, FFCC, Bundles 332 and 446.

many other provincial capitals.<sup>124</sup> In Madrid, since the very moment the dictator announced the creation of the official party, both Liberals and Conservatives opposed it on grounds of ideology. For both *El Sol* and *La Época*, the UP was a extreme-right party and its creation a serious burden for the eventual return to a constitutional regime.<sup>125</sup> In the capital, Liberal and Conservatives began to understand the implications of the dictator's move. For all his comments on the temporary character of his position in power, Primo was there to stay.

Internal squabbles, the delegates' inefficiency and ideological opposition mounted by those who had initially supported the regime certainly hampered the consolidation of a strong UP during the Military Directory. Yet it is important to notice that during its first years the dictator did not seem terribly eager to endow the UP with a relevant function in the regime and prioritised the power of the military over the party. It was only by the autumn of 1925, once he had decided to form the Civil Directory, that the dictator increasingly began to promote the role of the UP, declaring it "independent" from governmental control and ready to rule Spain.<sup>126</sup> As explained in chapter 3, it was also then that the UP ideologues arrived in the public arena, the dictatorship was endowed with a nation-wide mouthpiece, *La Nación*, and the founding (or buying) of provincial pro-government newspapers increased.

The UP created the most sophisticated propaganda network known in any Spanish political party. In 1926, the Madrid UP divided the party into five main sections, including one for "Culture, Propaganda and Publicity".<sup>127</sup> By early 1927, this section had formed Propaganda and Political Actions Commissions in every district of the capital, which in turn created diverse neighbourhood propaganda subcommittees.<sup>128</sup> In addition, the Madrid UP provincial headquarters were divided in four sections: propaganda, provincial affairs, local affairs and statistics. Conceived as a centre of information, the headquarters had their own census, a press archive on

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<sup>123</sup> For the internal disputes in Barcelona see Ucalay, "La represi6", 169-171. For the struggle in Gerona see Lluís Costa i Fernández, *La Dictadura de Primo de Rivera (1923-1930). Comunicació i propaganda a les comarques gironines* [Barcelona: 1995], 7.

<sup>124</sup> Ben-Ami, *Fascism*, 143-144.

<sup>125</sup> *El Sol* and *La Época* reactions to the creation of the UP in April 1924 in Gómez-Navarro, "La Unión Patriótica", 108.

<sup>126</sup> *La Nación*, 18-10-1925.

<sup>127</sup> The other four sections were Government, Finances, Madrid Public Works and Interior. *Unión Patriótica*, 15-12-1926.

<sup>128</sup> *Unión Patriótica*, 15-1-1927.

political and social issues and collected data on every single militant.<sup>129</sup> The UP structure in Barcelona also shows a modern and extremely hierarchical concept of party structure being implemented by the *primorrriveristas*. The provincial *jefe*, Andrés Gassó y Vidal, former secretary of the *Cámara de la Propiedad Urbana de Barcelona*, directed the party with the assistance of a Provincial Committee. Under direct control of the Provincial Committee there were ten District committees, covering all of Barcelona's urban area. In four of the most populated districts subcommittees were formed so the party could reach every single neighbourhood of the city. In addition, over ten UP Cultural Centres were opened all around the Catalan capital to improve the propaganda work and counterbalance the appeal of leftist *casas del pueblo*. On top of this, youth, women and workers' sections of the UP were created seeking to attract new members by appealing to specific sectors of the population. The power of Gassó extended the boundaries of the city. He commanded 13 Provincial *Jefe* Delegates, who, in turn, were aided by a plethora of Assistant Delegates (*Delegados Asesores*). The Provincial Delegates' mission was to tour around the province checking the development of tens of local committees and UP Cultural Centres in towns and villages and reporting back to Gassó.<sup>130</sup>

The creation of such a vast network in the cities was indicative of the dictatorship's will to form a modern party able to reach many different sectors of society. Especially telling was the formation of UP female sections. According to the official discourse, women were key players in the process of nation-building not just as mothers but also as heroines who had played an important historic role in the formation of the Spanish patria. Additionally, in the eyes of the regime women were considered citizens, albeit not in equal terms to men when it came to the right to vote. True, Calvo Sotelo's Municipal Statute had granted women the right to vote for the first time in Spanish history. Yet only widows and orphans over 23 years of age were enfranchised, thus excluding the vast majority of Spanish women. Even if the right to vote was never exercised, for elections were never held during the dictatorship, the measure elicited great apprehension in traditionalist quarters.<sup>131</sup> Primo provoked still more controversy when all women were allowed to "vote" (i.e. to sign in favour of the dictatorship) in the 1926 plebiscite. The official press hailed Primo as a revolutionary

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<sup>129</sup> *Unión Patriótica*, 1-6-1927.

<sup>130</sup> *Unión Patriótica*, 15-4-1927.

visionary of modern politics, while clerical reactionaries condemned women's participation in political acts.<sup>132</sup>

In fact, the incorporation of women into the political arena was in total concordance with the *primorriverista* concept of "controlled female mobilisation".<sup>133</sup> The idea was the gradual incorporation of women into provincial *juntas*, town councils, educational and charity institutions via the UP. Thus, when the party began to create female sections these were essentially devoted to 'pedagogic' tasks, such as publishing patriotic children's magazines, lecturing, practising collective gymnastic exercises singing nationalist songs and teaching the lower classes how to read and write at the UP cultural centres.<sup>134</sup> Some other propagandist activities were also related to charity, such as organising free lunches for the poor. For example, when in May 1927 a lunch for 560 poor people was organised at the *Casa de la UP* in Madrid, the *primorriveristas* declared that those sort of acts were more important to "building the patria than all the discourses of charlatan propagandists" – a clear allusion to the Socialists.<sup>135</sup> In other words, providing food and teaching basic literacy skills became the means of a paternalist approach through which the regime aimed at gaining the support of the lower classes.

Notwithstanding the many problems that the regime found in the creation and organisation of the party, the UP dramatically increased its membership throughout 1925. By July 1926, when the *Gran Junta Nacional de la Unión Patriótica* was established, Primo declared that "more than 700,000 individuals, including women", were affiliated to the party.<sup>136</sup> A year later, an editorial in *Unión Patriótica* claimed the number of members was 1,319,428.<sup>137</sup> Although these figures have to be taken with more than a few grains of salt, there is little doubt that the regime had formed the largest right-wing political party in the history of Spain.<sup>138</sup>

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<sup>131</sup> For a *primorriverista* defence of the limited franchise for women see José Fontán Palomo, *Haber del directorio* [Barcelona: 1925], 125.

<sup>132</sup> *La Nación*, 13-10-1926.

<sup>133</sup> See articles by Carmen Ferns Zazacondgui in *Unión Patriótica*, 6-11-1926, and 1-12-1926.

<sup>134</sup> For women's conferences at the UP culture centres see *Unión Patriótica*, 1-6-1927. For the gymnastics exercises and the singing of nationalist anthems, *Unión Patriótica*, 15-7-1927. For the funding of "patriotic" children's magazines see "Sección Femenina de la Unión Patriótica de Terrasa", ADPB, Departamento de Instrucción Pública, Bundle 4176, File 23.

<sup>135</sup> *Unión Patriótica*, 1-6-1927.

<sup>136</sup> *Unión Patriótica*, 1-10-1926.

<sup>137</sup> *Unión Patriótica*, 15-7-1927.

<sup>138</sup> Figures of UP membership nation-wide are almost impossible to get, for the official press only published the data for the year 1927 and the aforementioned archive of the UP headquarters in Madrid disappeared without a trace during the Second Republic. Gómez-Navarro calculates the UP had

## Ceremonies and mobilisation

Together with the official press, the military and the *Somatén*, Primo increasingly relied on the party to carry out propaganda tasks. In line with their “pedagogic” mission, UP Culture Centres all around Spain organised hundreds of “patriotic lectures”. As in the case of the governmental delegates’ Sunday conferences, the *upetistas* not only lectured on the greatness of the Spanish nation and the goodness of the regime but also covered professional, technical and cultural topics in their dissertations. A more sophisticated version of the “patriotic lectures” were the so-called “patriotic affirmation acts”. These usually included a lecture followed by a banquet, speeches, and an afternoon party, where the public danced to traditional folkloric music such as *jotas*.<sup>139</sup> Food and dancing were combined here with patriotic indoctrination creating a festive atmosphere and thus attempting to make the nationalist discourse more appealing to the popular classes.

While some of these acts took place indoors, it is important to notice that the *primorriveristas* developed a taste for open-air ceremonies. Popular banquets, dances, and the opening of public buildings were all considered good opportunities to celebrate acts of patriotic affirmation. The idea behind these ceremonies was using the party to help the regime to monopolise the public political sphere – a task, as we have seen, to which the army and the *Somatén* also contributed significantly. In fact, the *primorriveristas* were prepared to go a long way to succeed in their endeavour. At a time when Basque Nationalists and Catalan regionalists were increasingly turning to hiking, as part of the few “cultural” activities that they were allowed to carry out without risking sanction, the *upetistas* countered and began to organise patriotic fieldtrips to the countryside.<sup>140</sup>

The party was also behind the official campaigns to promote the consumption Spanish products. Launched almost on a yearly basis, these campaigns “in defence of Spanish goods” significantly targeted women and presented the purchase of products

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1,696,304 members in 1928 according to official provincial figures. However, he acknowledges that these figures were clearly adulterated and reckons the real militancy could be four times less than the official figures suggest. Gómez-Navarro, *El régimen*, 231.

<sup>139</sup> Tens of these lectures and ‘patriotic affirmation acts’ were regularly reported in the pages of *Unión Patriótica*.

<sup>140</sup> See, for example, the field trip to the Church of Santa Cruz de Olorde organised by the Barcelona UP, *La Razón*, 4-2-1928. For Catalan regionalists’ promotion of hiking see *La Veu*, 19-11-1923. For the case of Basque Nationalists see Pablo et. al., *El péndulo*, 181.

“Made in Spain” as a “patriotic duty”.<sup>141</sup> It is evident that these campaigns were in accord with the regime’s economic nationalism.<sup>142</sup> Yet, on closer examination, it is possible to detect a more subtle goal behind the promotion of domestic products. The campaigns constantly emphasised the fact that Spanish products were “as good or better than foreign ones” and heavily criticised those Spaniards who assumed foreign goods were better than Spanish ones just because they were manufactured abroad. At the heart of this criticism lay not only a vindication of Spanish products, but also of Spain as a nation. By claiming the superiority of Spanish goods over foreign ones, the regime aimed at ending what it saw as a Spanish inferiority complex - a complex that led Spaniards to assume the superiority of their fellow Europeans in many different fields. It was not by chance that the magazine of the UP had a section called “Successful Spaniards Abroad” which reported the professional achievements of Spaniards in Europe and the Americas as evidence of the international respect for Spain as a nation. It almost goes without saying that the regime tried to capitalise on these “successes” and presented them as part of Spain’s revitalisation under the dictatorship.

This triumphant representation of Spain has to be understood within the new positive image of the nation fostered by the regime both at discursive and symbolic levels. As a reaction to the “pessimistic nationalism” of the Generation of 98, the *primorriveristas* heralded the immediate re-birth of the Spanish nation. Likewise, official propaganda began to represent the nation in more positive terms. The regime reproduced nineteenth century paintings representing key moments in Spanish history in stamps, postcards, almanacs and even the packing of sweets.<sup>143</sup> This representation of the so-called “history painting” sought to popularise pictures of a victorious Spain against Muslim infidels, while simultaneously emphasising the Catholic nature of the fatherland. In addition, the *primorriveristas* were resolute in endowing the image of Spain with a more festive character and hence the official press began to depict bullfighting and *romerías* as the expression of the real national character. What is interesting when looking at personifications of Spain as a female figure during the dictatorship is the process of “Andalusization” that the image of the patria underwent.

<sup>141</sup> See, for example, “Prefiramos productos españoles”, *Unión Patriótica*, 1-4-1927. For campaigns specifically addressing women see the manifesto of the *Comité femenino pro-Producción Nacional*, in María José González Castillejo, “Los conceptos de mujer, ciudadanía y patria en la Dictadura de Primo de Rivera, Imágenes, símbolos y estereotipos”, *Mujeres y ciudadanía* [Málaga: 1993], 9.

<sup>142</sup> For the regime’s economic nationalism see Ben-Ami, *Fascism*, 240-264.



In clear opposition to the *fin de siècle* icon of the *Mater Dolorosa*, *primorriverista* propaganda represented Spain as a joyful and beautiful Andalusian young lady.<sup>144</sup> Against the Castilian sense of austerity, restraint and drama represented in the paintings of the artists of the Generation of 98, the *primorriverista* icons portrayed joy, youth and beauty in bright colours, much in consonance with the official idea of a rejuvenated nation. Paradoxically, in doing so the *primorriverista* partially perpetuated in the Spanish collective imaginary the “orientalist” representation of Spain as Andalusia created by foreign travellers throughout the nineteenth century.

Whilst foreign “recognition” of Spanish achievements became an essential propaganda tool to nationalise Spaniards at home, the UP also explored xenophobic routes to mobilise the man in the street. To begin with, the aforementioned “campaigns against bad Spaniards” not only targeted those Spanish citizens denouncing the abuses the regime abroad, but also the foreigners who, “jealous of the Spanish resurrection”, gave them credit and support.<sup>145</sup> On other occasions, the *upetistas* were mobilised to protest against “anti-Spanish campaigns” following criticism of the regime in the foreign press.<sup>146</sup> The campaigns were a way to show the world that the Spanish people stood by its dictator and no “foreign intervention” whatsoever would alter the nation’s destiny to regain its place in the sun. After all, the *primorriveristas* repeated again and again, it was the envy of Spanish greatness that led foreigners to invent the Black Legend. The moral of the story was that foreigners could not be trusted and Spanish liberals’ admiration for French and British political systems posed a threat to the very essence of the nation. Probably no one put it in blunter terms than Commander Rodríguez Tarduchy, when he penned that praising foreigners equalled “de-Spanishizing Spain”.<sup>147</sup> Paradoxical as it may seem, the *upetista* discourse and ceremonies had a strongly contradictory character. On the one hand, the *primorriveristas* copied the ideas and ceremonies of the Italian fascist and the French extreme Right and show an acute need to be positively recognised by

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<sup>143</sup> Álvarez Junco, *Mater Dolorosa*, 258.

<sup>144</sup> See, for instance, the pictures of young Andalusian ladies going to a *romería* on the front page of *La Nación*, 28-10-1925. See also Spain represented as a young Andalusian lady on the front page of *La Nación*, 12-10-1929. See also the publicity posters of the 1929 Ibero-American exhibition in Seville in Rosa Cal, “El mundo de las exposiciones (III). Del IV Centenario a Sevilla-Barcelona (1929)”, *Historia* 16, n. 194, (1987), 88.

<sup>145</sup> *Unión Patriótica*, 17-5-1927.

<sup>146</sup> This was the case of the student revolt, which was presented as having been instigated by foreign interests.

<sup>147</sup> Rodríguez Tarduchy, *Psicología*, 309-310.

foreigners - which in a way indicates that the *primorriveristas* suffered from the same inferiority complex that they intended to cure Spaniards of. On the other hand, the regime needed to create a 'foreign threat' in order to be able to play the xenophobic card in the game of mass mobilisation. For all the *primorriverista* contradictions, it is important to notice that both discourse and ceremonies perfectly suited the *upetista* Manichean view of a world divided between Good and Evil. And this clear-cut dichotomy was probably more useful to stir nationalist emotions than any other complex political analysis.

Like Fascist Italy, and later Nazi Germany, the official party in Spain acted as the mediator between leader and the masses to transmit both discourse and symbolised myths.<sup>148</sup> Discursively, the *primorriverista* press propagated the image of the dictator as a prophetic leader and a national saviour in religious terms.<sup>149</sup> Additionally, the official media constantly printed pictures of the national *Caudillo* in newspapers, magazines, pamphlets, and brochures, while Primo's portraits were frequently displayed in UP centres and public ceremonies.<sup>150</sup> Furthermore, tens of towns and villages named streets and squares after the dictator and, from 1926 onwards, the vast majority of new elementary schools chose as their namesake Primo de Rivera. Admittedly, Primo lacked the oratory skills of Mussolini and the UP did not have the propagandistic strength of the Fascist Party, but this was no impediment for the regime's attempt to create a personality cult of the dictator. It was Primo's showmanship concept of politics that fuelled this cult of personality. In Madrid, the UP regularly held rallies in front of Primo's house, the *Palacio de Buenavista*, to show their support for the dictator, a liturgy which reminded the British ambassador to Madrid of Fascist gatherings at the *Palazzo Venezia*.<sup>151</sup>

Primo's constant tours around Spain provided UP provincial branches with a good opportunity to mobilise supporters. On some occasions, the presence of the dictator certainly led to the organisation of grand gatherings. On 29 May 1924, for instance, 30,000 people gathered in Medina del Campo to hear the speech of the dictator.<sup>152</sup> In January 1926, liturgies during his visit to Barcelona included a

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<sup>148</sup> For Spain see *La Nación*, 11-12-1925.

<sup>149</sup> See Chapters 2 and 3.

<sup>150</sup> Among many other examples, see *El Somatén*, August 1924; *Unión Patriótica*, 1-4-1927; *La Nación*, 13-9-1927.

<sup>151</sup> Ben Ami, *Fascism*, 157.

<sup>152</sup> A photographic reportage of the event was published two years later in *Unión Patriótica*, 1-11-1926.

gargantuan parade of 20,000 *upetistas* marching in front of Primo and a separate rally at the Olympia Theatre which gathered together 7,000 “selected” supporters.<sup>153</sup> In September 1928, the celebrations of the fifth anniversary of the coup set in motion the entire party network. For a week, the *upetistas* organised meetings, lunches and parades in hundreds of towns and villages throughout the country.<sup>154</sup> The central focus of the celebrations was, however, to be in Madrid. Thousands of UP militants all over Spain were given free train tickets and boxed lunches to travel to the capital. According to the official press, 100,000 *upetistas* marched on the streets of Madrid on 13 September 1928 to commemorate the anniversary.<sup>155</sup> Three days later 40,000 *primorriveristas* paraded in Barcelona.<sup>156</sup>

Perhaps no other celebration epitomises better the eclectic character of the *primorriverista* ceremonies than the *Fiesta de la Raza*. The 12<sup>th</sup> of October celebration provided the regime with an excellent opportunity to disseminate its anti-Black Legend discourse, to emphasise the supremacy of Castilian language and to present the legacy of the Spanish empire in a positive light.<sup>157</sup> In clear opposition to the pessimist and pro-European views of the Generation of 98, the *primorriveristas* celebrated the nation in an optimistic fashion looking towards America. Additionally, the *Fiesta de la Raza* emphasised the sacred character of the nation. The 12<sup>th</sup> of October coincided with the popular celebration of the Virgin of Pilar, the national patron saint.<sup>158</sup> Together with military parades, open-air masses placing the patria under the protection of the Virgin of Pilar became a common event of the *Fiesta de la Raza* all over Spain. Again, religion was considered to be “the most powerful engine to reach the heart of the masses” and Catholic iconography and rituals were used to stir the emotions of the people in favour of the national ideal and the regime alike.<sup>159</sup>

Whereas the religious character of the Day of the Race had been paramount since the Maura government declared October the 12<sup>th</sup> an official fiesta in 1918, the military connotations of the celebration became increasingly important from 1923 onwards. During the dictatorship, delegates were in charge of organising the festival

<sup>153</sup> *Unión Patriótica*, 15-4-1927.

<sup>154</sup> *La Nación*, 10-9-1928; 11-9-1928; 12-9-1928.

<sup>155</sup> *La Nación*, 13-9-1928.

<sup>156</sup> *La Nación*, 17-9-1928.

<sup>157</sup> See, for example, Vicente Gay in *El Debate*, 13-10-1923.

<sup>158</sup> For the political use of the Virgin of Pilar from the Peninsular War to the 1930s see Giuliana Di Febo, *La Santa de la Raza* [Barcelona: 1988], 35-42.

<sup>159</sup> Rodríguez Tarduchy, *Psicología*, 249.

in towns and villages, army parades were included as part of the nationalist ritual and military authorities presided over the celebrations. This military character was especially emphasised in 1927, when the 12<sup>th</sup> of October was declared “Fiesta of the Race, the Soldier and Peace” to commemorate the Spanish victory in Morocco. The main events of the celebration took place in Zaragoza, where, after the usual masses and consecrations of national flags, hundreds of soldiers marched in a parade presided over by Primo.<sup>160</sup> Catholicism, the old empire and the new colonies were all celebrated at the same time in a symbiosis of past and present united in religious permanence.

The process of “militarization” of the *Fiesta de la Raza* formed part of a broader strategy to take the celebration into the streets. From 1918 to 1923 the celebrations had on many occasions taken place indoors and the *Fiesta de la Raza* had gained relatively little popular support.<sup>161</sup> The widespread celebration of open-air masses and military parades, together with the regime’s mobilisation of UP members, *somatenistas* and school children to march in the streets as part of the ceremonies, transformed the commemoration of the fiesta during the dictatorship. In order to achieve this transformation Primo used party and state resources alike. In early 1925, the dictator declared that the UP had among its missions to stir the people’s “spiritual vibrations [of] love for the race”. As a result, diverse sections of the party issued manifestos mobilising *upetistas* and organised public UP flag sanctifications as part of the *Fiesta de la Raza* celebrations.<sup>162</sup> Conceived as a ceremony especially suitable for the indoctrination of young people, the dictatorship fostered their incorporation into the *Fiesta de la Raza*. Provincial administrations devoted part of their resources to propagate the *Hispanista* ideal in educational centres and public libraries, teachers were instructed to devote some hours to explain to pupils the grandeur of *Hispanismo*, while the regime carefully organised the participation of children from public and private schools in the *Fiesta de la Raza* parades.<sup>163</sup>

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<sup>160</sup> *La Nación*, 12-10-1927.

<sup>161</sup> See reports from different ceremonies in provincial capitals in *La Vanguardia*, 13-10-1923 and *El Debate*, 13-10-1923.

<sup>162</sup> Primo’s speech, 10-4-1925, in Casa, *Dos años*, 842-843. For the manifestos mobilising the party’s rank and file and the sanctification of the UP flags see *El Noticiero Universal*, 11-10-1928 and 12-10-1928.

<sup>163</sup> In October 1925, the *Diputación de Barcelona*, for instance, supplied special issues of the *Revista Hispano Americana* to schools and libraries. See ADPB, Bundle 4176, File 49. The instructions to school teachers in *La Nación*, 12-10-1926 and 10-10-1928.

There can be little doubt that the *primorriverista* efforts to popularise the fiesta paid off. By 1928, Madrid witnessed huge parades with 30,000 children marching in the streets, while the Barcelona press also noted the massive celebrations showed the *Fiesta de la Raza* had taken a firm root in the Catalan capital.<sup>164</sup> Furthermore, hundreds of villages celebrated the *Fiesta de la Raza* for the first time during the dictatorship, proving once again the key role of the governmental delegates in spreading patriotic rituals. Yet the use of the *Fiesta de la Raza* as a device for governmental propaganda and the continual representation of nation and dictatorship as conterminous were soon to prove costly for the *primorriveristas*. As in the *Somatén* ceremonies, once the regime entered its final crisis in 1929 the participation in the ceremonies decreased remarkably.<sup>165</sup> More importantly, notwithstanding *primorriverista* efforts, the impact of the *Fiesta de la Raza* on the population was at best dubious. In an editorial of October 1930, *La Nación* bitterly acknowledged that some were not convinced of the efficiency of the celebrations while others simply considered the *Fiesta de la Raza* useless.<sup>166</sup> The following year, Berenguer's government removed the militarist connotations of the *Fiesta de la Raza* and opted for a more low-key celebration.<sup>167</sup> The Republican-Socialist government of 1931-33 declared the Fiesta a national holiday, but removed the Catholic masses from the celebration and shifted the emphasis of the official discourse towards liberal *Hispanismo*.<sup>168</sup> Democratic principles and the Spanish language, and not Catholicism and militarism, became the dominant themes of the celebration.

### **Crisis, radicalisation and fall**

By 1928, the fact that the UP was not making the expected impact on the population became obvious to some local leaders. Consequently, they began to send proposals to Primo to radically improve the propagandist techniques of the party. Some of the proposals were concerned with symbolism. After all, with the exception of the party emblem and flags, which were positioned on the façade of the UP centres, and the cockade with the national colours worn by some militants during patriotic

<sup>164</sup> For Madrid see *La Nación*, 12-10-1928. For Barcelona see *El Noticiero Universal*, 12-10-1928.

<sup>165</sup> According to the *primorriverista* press the number of children marching in the streets of Madrid had dropped from 35,000 in 1926 to 20,000 in 1929. *La Nación*, 12-10-1926 and 12-10-1929.

<sup>166</sup> *La Nación*, 11-10-1930.

<sup>167</sup> *La Nación*, 11-10-1930.

<sup>168</sup> *El Sol*, 12-10-1932; 13-10-1932; *El Debate*, 12-10-1932; 13-10-1932.

acts, the UP had done very little to promote distinctive party symbols. The *somatenista* and *upetista* mayor of the district of Miraflores del Palo (Málaga), Manuel Moreno Millán, proposed the mandatory placing of the Spanish flag and coat of arms on all public buildings, including post offices, and churches. But these were not to be conventional national flags. Moreno wanted the UP emblem, its tenet and the date of 13 September to be embroidered to the national flag, so all citizens would have the nation, the party and its leader “impressed on their brains from a very early age”.<sup>169</sup> Some other proposals focussed on improving governmental propaganda in the press. For example, the *upetista* Anselmo Blasco thought that the “great benefits” brought by the regime to Spain did “not reach the masses, which seem[ed] unaware of them”.<sup>170</sup> Consequently, Moreno proposed the creation of a modern magazine, with a circulation of 1 million issues per month including English, French, German, Italian, Portuguese and Arabic editions.

These petitions did not fall in deaf ears. In 1928, Primo created the *Junta de Propaganda Patriótica y Ciudadana* (JPPC). A special branch of the Press and Censorship Cabinet, the JPPC was directed by Lieutenant Máximo Cuervo, *jefe* of the Bureau of the President. Cuervo, Caledonio de la Iglesia, the head of the censorship department, and a team of fifty military officers, soon centralised *primorriverista* propaganda efforts and began publishing books and pamphlets. In the spring of 1929, the JPPC published *Cursos de Ciudadanía* (a compilation of lectures by regime ideologues), followed by *Las Dictaduras y el Sr. Cambó* later that year, and produced a series of pamphlets and postcards to be distributed among public officers and the general public at large.<sup>171</sup> At the same time, the JJPC co-ordinated massive publication of the dictator and the *primorriverista* ideologues’ books. These works were later sent to all civil governors, who in turn distributed them among schools, cultural organisations, town councils, libraries, military barracks and UP centres.<sup>172</sup>

In addition, the JJPC orchestrated a series of “patriotic demonstrations” to protest against the “conspiracy” of the foreign press and the student revolt.<sup>173</sup> With the

<sup>169</sup> Manuel Moreno Millán to Presidencia del Gobierno, 19-10-1928, AHN, Presidencia del Gobierno, Bundle 204, Box 1.

<sup>170</sup> Anselmo Blanco to Primo de Rivera, 20-5-1928, AHN, Gobernación, Serie A, Bundle 17A, Box 2.

<sup>171</sup> The postcards were to be signed by state and municipal officers as proof of support for the dictatorship. AHN, Presidencia del Gobierno, Bundle 199, Box 1 and Bundle 192, Box 2.

<sup>172</sup> For the publication and distribution of the works see various documents in AHN, Presidencia del Gobierno, Bundle 190, Box 1, Bundle 192, Box 1, Bundle 199, Box 1, and Bundle 204, Box 2.

<sup>173</sup> *Unión Patriótica*, 15-4-1929.

help of the civil governors, the JPPC mobilised UP militants to participate in patriotic acts in which signatures of support for the regime were collected and thousand of pamphlets delivered. As the civil governor of Lugo crudely put it, these acts were a good opportunity “to flood the province with [pamphlets] and make citizens swallow their concepts”.<sup>174</sup> Furthermore, domestic propaganda was coupled with international promotion of the dictatorship. Cuervo tried to intensify the regime’s presence in the international media and prepared a series of new publications to be sold abroad. Seeking to counter the increasingly negative image the regime was gaining in Europe and Latin America, the JPPC co-ordinated its activities with *Plus Ultra* –the propaganda agency established by Primo in Paris in 1926 to promote the image of the regime in the international arena.<sup>175</sup> As a result of this collaboration, the JPPC launched *La España de Hoy. Periodico editado en español, francés, alemán e inglés para propagar en todo el mundo el resurgimiento actual de España* and *España Nueva*, and funded the translation into French of propagandists’ works, such as Pemartín’s *Los valores históricos en la Dictadura*.<sup>176</sup>

The JPPC also supported private propagandist initiatives in defence of the regime.<sup>177</sup> The most notorious case was *Propagandistas de España*, a civil nationalist organisation devoted to “inspire the masses to praise the Spanish Race” which, according to the official records, had “had almost no activity whatsoever” since its foundation in 1927.<sup>178</sup> In July 1929, however, *Propagandistas de España* was granted official recognition by Primo and the JJPC began to assist the patriotic association.<sup>179</sup> The reason for this backing was the JJPC’s urgency to promote the Seville and Barcelona international exhibitions of 1929. In June that year, the Bureau of the President had received a shocking report from the Commissioner of the Ibero-American Exhibition in Seville stating that the exposition desperately needed more

<sup>174</sup> Civil Governor of Lugo to Cuervo, 30-7-1929, AHN, Presidencia del Gobierno, Bundle 192, Box 1.

<sup>175</sup> For the activities of *Plus Ultra* see Rosa Cal, “Los gastos reservados y la prensa con Primo de Rivera”, *Historia* 16, n. 271, November 1989, 72-77.

<sup>176</sup> AHN, Presidencia del Gobierno, Bundle 204, Box 2.

<sup>177</sup> Some examples of the JPPC backing of individuals’ propagandist initiatives in AHN Presidencia del Gobierno, Bundle 192, Box 2.

<sup>178</sup> For the goals of *Propagandistas de España* see José Gallo de Renobales to Cuervo, 8-6-1929 and Cuervo to José Gallo de Renobales, 12-6-1929, AHN Presidencia del Gobierno, Bundle 192, Box 2. For the *Propagandistas de España* lack of activity see the JPPC brief to Primo 16-7-1929, AHN, Presidencia del Gobierno, Bundle 199, Box 1.

<sup>179</sup> JPPC brief to Primo 16-7-1929, AHN, Presidencia del Gobierno, Bundle 199, Box 1.

visitors.<sup>180</sup> The Commissioner pointed out that many foreigners would not visit the exhibition due to the “[political] atmosphere in the country” and “the alarming situation” created abroad by the *primorriverista* opposition.<sup>181</sup> More importantly, the report suggested not enough Spaniards were visiting the exhibitions in Seville and Barcelona and, hence, the people could not grasp the “patriotic effort” carried out by the regime in organising the events. The proposal by the Commission was an “integral plan” to publicise Seville and Barcelona exhibitions both in Spain and abroad. The plan was an example of a modern approach to propaganda similar to that put in practice by Mussolini in the 1932 Exhibition of the Fascist Revolution.<sup>182</sup> It included the participation of embassies, public officers, publicity agencies and other private companies, such as travel agencies, hotels, restaurants and health resorts, and emphasised the use of posters, cinema and flyers as the most effective means of attracting the public.<sup>183</sup>

The report constituted a serious blow to a project that Primo himself had passionately endorsed since his first days in power. For all the money and propaganda the dictatorship had put into the exhibitions throughout the years the results were a fiasco.<sup>184</sup> It was not only that the actions of the opposition were having a knock-on effect in restraining the number of foreign visitors but, more crucially, the fact that Spaniards were not visiting the expositions deprived the regime of a political success at home. Unlike Italy, where the 1932 Exhibition of the Fascist Revolution constituted a key event in the construction of the so-called “culture of consent” and encouraged mass support for Mussolini’s dictatorship, the Seville and Barcelona exhibitions elicited the wrath of Spanish Republicans.<sup>185</sup> In their view, the Seville and Barcelona exhibitions were nothing but clear evidence of Primo’s megalomania and a deceitful

<sup>180</sup> “Propuesta de propaganda y publicidad presentada a la Comisión Permanente de la Exposición Ibero Americana en la sesión de 14 de junio de 1929”, AHN, Presidencia del Gobierno, Bundle 199, Box 1.

<sup>181</sup> “Propuesta de propaganda y publicidad”, AHN, Presidencia del Gobierno, Bundle 199, Box 1.

<sup>182</sup> For the Fascist propagandist effort see Jeffrey T. Schnapp, “Epic Demonstrations. Fascist Modernity and the 1932 Exhibition of the Fascist Revolution”, in Richard J. Golsan (ed.), *Fascism, Aesthetics, and Culture* [Hanover, NH: 1992], 1-37.

<sup>183</sup> “Propuesta de propaganda y publicidad”, AHN, Presidencia del Gobierno, Bundle 199, Box 1.

<sup>184</sup> Economically, both exhibitions went hugely over budget. A report of the Presidency Bureau pointed out on 28 May 1929 (just one day after the opening of the Barcelona exhibition) that the *Comité de la Exposición Internacional de Barcelona* already had a deficit of 390,000 pesetas. Bureau of the President to Primo de Rivera, 28-5-1929, AHN, Presidencia del Gobierno, Bundle 204, Box 3. For the organisation and budget of the exhibitions in Seville and Barcelona see Cal, “El mundo de las exposiciones”, 86-92; Pike, *Hispanismo*, 227.

<sup>185</sup> For the success and mass support of the 1932 Exhibition of the Fascist Revolution see Marla Stone, *The Patron State* [Princeton, New Jersey: 1998], 129-176.



manifestation of the decadent monarchic system.<sup>186</sup> Far from attracting the population towards the national ideal, the exhibitions seems to have further exacerbated the divisions among Spaniards.

In many senses, the *primorriverista* propaganda offensive came too late. By the time the JPPC was formed the UP was losing members and the dictatorship was in crisis. At the heart of the party's problems lay its very official nature. This had attracted many opportunists who hoped to benefit from their affiliation but were not committed to the regime - ideologically or otherwise.<sup>187</sup> Evidence of this lack of political commitment is to be found in the party organs. For a party which claimed to have over a million militants, the fact that *La Nación* and *Unión Patriótica* had circulations of 50,000 and 6,000 issues respectively shows that the UP affiliates did not even bother to read the official press. By 1926, it was clear to senior figures in the regime that the UP was a breeding-ground of personal ambitions for many members. In December, Milans del Bosch and Barrera publicly called for a purge of the party and "elimination of all those that had joined [the UP] in bad faith".<sup>188</sup> Nevertheless, the task of reorganising the UP on 'purer' ideological bases did not begin until January 1930, when both party and dictatorship were collapsing.<sup>189</sup>

The factor that most significantly contributed to the fall of the UP, and to a large extent to the collapse of the regime, was the loss of Social Catholics' support for the party. From 1928, the Social Catholics grew increasingly disaffected with the dictatorship as they began to understand that Primo was not going to implement their political agenda. The exclusion of Catholic trade unions in the *comités paritarios* and the educational reforms granting more power to the state to the detriment of the Church were all indicative of the divergent route the dictatorship was taking from the Social Catholics' goals.<sup>190</sup> Social Catholic discontent can be detected in the pages of *El Debate* from the Autumn of 1928, when the newspaper questioned the regime's attitude towards the Catholic Church and demanded more state money for the clergy. This campaign led to a furious response by *La Nación* defending government spending on the clergy while reaffirming the subordinate status of the Catholic

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<sup>186</sup> Republican critique of the Seville exhibition in María José Ruiz Acosta, "Hacia el gran reto: la labor de la prensa en preparación de la Exposición Iberoamericana de 1929", *Historia y Comunicación Social*, 2, (1997), 221-227.

<sup>187</sup> As Calvo Sotelo acknowledged in *Mis servicios*, 331-332.

<sup>188</sup> *Unión Patriótica*, 1-12-1926.

<sup>189</sup> *Unión Patriótica*, 15-1-1930.

<sup>190</sup> See chapters 3 and 5.

Church vis-à-vis the state.<sup>191</sup> Moreover, in what constituted a common subterfuge to pass negative judgements on to the Spanish dictatorship, Ángel Herrera's newspaper intensified its criticism of Italian fascism.<sup>192</sup> In April 1929, following the censoring of an editorial in *El Debate*, Herrera wrote a letter of complaint to Máximo Cuervo explaining that the article was pro-monarchical and was aimed at "destroying the republican atmosphere that four Republican intellectual politicians were trying to spread in Madrid". Crucially, Herrera added that the newspaper's campaign to promote the figure of the King, sought to facilitate "an easy transition to a different regime".<sup>193</sup> In the spring of 1929, the rift between the dictatorship and the Social Catholics was widening by the day.

The consequences of the split were catastrophic for the official party. Throughout 1929, both Social Catholic cadres and rank and file militants increasingly left the UP as the dictatorship faced one crisis after another. It is important to notice here that the Social Catholics' gradual withdrawal led to the radical authoritarian wing of the party to take absolute control over the UP.<sup>194</sup> Moreover, all this happened in a moment when Primo had turned the UP and the *Somatén* into espionage and police institutions, seeking to make political repression more efficient. However, the results of this "totalitarian drive" were counterproductive, for it was not only ineffective in curbing opposition to the dictatorship, but it also made the UP and the *Somatén* more unpopular.<sup>195</sup> Especially damaging for the UP was the new legislation to repress suspected dissidents from among public servants.<sup>196</sup> Functionaries constituted the largest professional sector of the party's rank and file, and indiscriminate arrests and random legislation alienated public servants from the regime.<sup>197</sup> No less important was the attack on professional groups, such as lawyers, doctors and architects, which turned against the dictatorship due to the *primorriverista* interventionism in their associations and the repressive measures taken against political dissidents. As a result,

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<sup>191</sup> *La Nación*, 12-10-1928.

<sup>192</sup> See *El Debate* editorials 2-11-1928; 13-11-1928; 20-11-1928; 27-11-1928.

<sup>193</sup> Ángel Herrera to Máximo Cuervo, 5-4-1929, AHN, Presidencia, FFCC, Bundle 192, Box 2, File 13003.

<sup>194</sup> Gil Pecharromán, *Conservadores*, 54.

<sup>195</sup> González and Rey, *La defensa*, 215.

<sup>196</sup> RD 4-2-1929, RCO, Additional Disposition, 8-2-1929, *El Somatén*, February, 1929; RCO 16-4-1929, *CLE*, n. 147, 86-87.

<sup>197</sup> *El Sol*, 5-2-1930.

the integration of middle-class professional groups into the regime, which Mussolini gradually achieved in Italy, never happened in Spain.<sup>198</sup>

In the spring and the summer of 1929, Cuervo and Martínez Anido orchestrated a series of patriotic acts to “demonstrate” to the opposition at home and the foreign press abroad that popular support for the regime remained unchanged.<sup>199</sup> Yet the fact that civil governors and delegates were once again in charge of organising the gatherings is indicative of the low level of independence the UP had gained throughout the years and, indeed, of the little trust the government had in the party’s capacity to mobilise the masses. Primo’s scepticism towards the UP was not unfounded. In April 1929, the Barcelona UP’s provincial *Jefe* bitterly informed the dictator about the inaction of the militants. In a frank letter to Primo, Gassó wrote that 90% of the members were either “indifferent” or “disappointed” with the regime. Another 5%, Gassó explained, went to party centres just to read the newspaper and play cards, and around 5% of the militants wished “to act in good faith, but owing to the lack of assistance by their *jefes* [their] enthusiasm could not materialise.... It can be said that *Not doing* is the tenet of the UP in Barcelona”.<sup>200</sup> Furthermore, the establishment of a branch of the JPPC in Barcelona did not make things any better for the *primorriveristas*. On the contrary, Gassó saw the establishment of a JJPC committee in Barcelona as a challenge to his position and became remarkably uncooperative.<sup>201</sup> Under such circumstances of lack of interest and disappointment of militants and internal struggles between the *primorriverista* cadres, it is hardly surprising that the UP failed to mobilise its members when it was most important for the survival of the regime.

The decadence of the party was implicitly admitted by Primo in late 1929. In an official note dated 17 December, the dictator boasted that the UP had “600,000 or 700,000 affiliates”. Regardless of the more than dubious correctness of the figure, the statement implied a loss of around 50% of UP militants in two years, compared to the

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<sup>198</sup> Francisco Villacorta, “Dictadura y grupos profesionales organizados”, *Ayer*, n. 40 (2000), 51-78.

See also Pilar Calvo Caballero, *Las organizaciones patronales en Castilla y León durante la Dictadura de Primo de Rivera* [Valladolid: 2004], 213-228.

<sup>199</sup> On diverse patriotic acts in the provinces of Granada, Lugo, Cádiz, Jaén, and Madrid see correspondence between civil governors and Máximo Cuervo in AHN, Presidencia, Bundle 192, Box 1.

<sup>200</sup> Gómez-Navarro, “La Unión Patriótica”, 138.

<sup>201</sup> For Gassó boycotting the actions of the JPPC in Barcelona see Eduardo Pérez Angulo, Jefe de la Junta de Propaganda Patriótica y Ciudadana de la Delegación Provincial de Barcelona, to Cuervo, 8-4-1929, AHN, Presidencia, Bundle 192, Box 2.

1.3 million affiliates *Unión Patriótica* claimed the party had in 1927.<sup>202</sup> Two weeks later, the dictator stated the obvious and conceded different sectors of society were disaffected with the regime, including Catholic political groups and functionaries - the two backbones of the UP rank and file.<sup>203</sup> After Primo was compelled to resign on 29 January 1930, the party simply collapsed. Once Berenguer ordered the civil governors to cut all support to the UP, the desperate calls for unity from the pages of *Unión Patriótica* were to no avail.<sup>204</sup> Created from above the official party could not survive without the *primorriverista* regime.

Nevertheless, a small group of *primorriverista* hard-liners were determined to build on the legacy of the dictatorship. In April 1930, ex-ministers and ideologues of the regime gathered together to form the *Unión Monárquica* (UM) in an attempt to replace the UP. The same month the UP Provincial Leaders Assembly recommended the *upetistas* to join the UM on an individual basis. During the summer of 1930 the last sections of the UP were dissolved.<sup>205</sup> The *primorriverista* dream of a great mass party faded away without the support of the state apparatus.

In 1923 Primo claimed he was to follow the example set by Mussolini. Seven years later his regime had collapsed while the fascist dictator had consolidated his power and enjoyed a certain level of popular support.<sup>206</sup> When comparing the development of the Fascist Party and the UP, the picture that emerges is one of two regimes travelling in opposite directions. In Italy, the Fascist Party gradually integrated different conservative groups and increasingly accommodated Catholic rhetoric into its discourse throughout the 1920s.<sup>207</sup> In 1929, the Lateran Agreements effectively integrated the Catholic Church into the Fascist state. Conversely, the UP increasingly radicalised its discourse, political goals and political personnel throughout the 1920s, a process which led to the gradual alienation of conservative groups from the regime. In 1929, the departure of the Social Catholics from the UP paved the way for the fall of the dictatorship.

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<sup>202</sup> Official note in Pérez, *La Dictadura*, 296-300.

<sup>203</sup> Official note, 31-12-1929, in *El Sol*, 1-1-1930.

<sup>204</sup> Primo's words for unity in *Unión Patriótica*, 8-2-1930.

<sup>205</sup> Gil Pecharromán, *Conservadores*, 56.

<sup>206</sup> Felice, *Mussolini il Duce*, 1-55.

<sup>207</sup> John Pollard, "Conservative Catholics and Italian Fascism: the Clerico-Fascists", in Blinkhorn, *Fascist and Conservatives*, 32-50.

## CONCLUSION: A POISONED LEGACY

How successful might the UP and the *Somatén* be considered as agencies of nationalisation? An overall consideration of the actions of the party and the militia indicates that the UP and the *Somatén*'s attempt to indoctrinate the masses was a failure. After all, the lack of mobilisation during the 1926 and 1929 revolts shows that not even the members of the party and the militia were fully committed to defend the dictatorship. Moreover, the very official nature of the UP and the *Somatén*, and the tight military control exercised over them linked the public's image of the agencies to the regime's popularity. This meant that when the dictator and the military began to lose popular support by 1928 the public's image of the party and the militia soon deteriorated. This process was abetted by the constant abuses by the *Somatén*, the privileges granted to UP members and the regime's 'totalitarian drive' of 1929. By transforming the party and the militia into repressive police institutions, the agencies' popularity severely decreased. The discrediting of the UP and *Somatén* had a knock-on effect on the public's perception of the National Catholic idea of Spain. Since the *primorrriveristas* constantly presented nation and regime as the very same thing, the drop in popular support for the regime led to the fall of support of the official idea of Spain. Thus, as in the case of the army, the actions of the party and the militia led to a 'negative nationalisation', in which increasing opposition to the state agents propagating the official canon of the nation were accompanied by the rejection of the very idea of nation defended by those agents.<sup>208</sup> The fact that disaffected middle-classes who had initially supported the regime increasingly turned towards the defence of a democratic and republican idea of Spain (or towards alternative nationalist movements in Catalonia and the Basque Country) has to be understood as a reaction to the monarchist authoritarian canon promoted by the UP and the *Somatén*. Unlike Mussolini, by the late 1920s Primo had failed to create a "culture of consent" that could integrate diverse social classes into the national ideal.<sup>209</sup>

The negative impact of the UP and the *Somatén* as agencies of mass nationalisation was obvious as soon as the dictatorship fell. Democratic liberals criticised the UP's "secret denunciations and illegal arrests" and claimed a democratic

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<sup>208</sup> For the 'negative effect' of the army as an agency of nationalisation see Chapter 5.

<sup>209</sup> On the creation of a "culture of consent" in Italy under Mussolini see Pier Giorgio Zunino, *L'ideologia del fascismo*, 176-180; Victoria de Grazia, *Culture of Consent: The Mass Organization of Labour* [Cambridge: 1981]; and Felice, *Mussolini il Fascista, La organizzazione dello Stato fascista* [Turin: 1968], 369-381

citizenry based on “the public exercise of rights and duties”.<sup>210</sup> Furthermore, six days after the fall of Primo, Ortega condemned the dictatorship’s policies for fostering the divisions among Spaniards and “de-nationalising” the state agencies.<sup>211</sup> The state apparatus, Ortega observed, was not at the service of all Spaniards but exclusively of the *primorriveristas*. For the *madrileño* philosopher, the formation of a “great national party” integrating all social classes was the only way to “renationalise” Spain.<sup>212</sup> A similar emphasis on democracy and civil rights is to be found in the socialists’ discourse. Against the *primorriverista* militarised concept of citizen, the socialists presented “the people” as the essence of the nation and asserted the need to educate the masses in civil and democratic values in order to form a democratic regime.<sup>213</sup> Significantly, the socialists challenged the Social Catholics’ claim to speak for the nation, arguing the “real Spain” was liberal and democratic and not the reactionary, backward-looking patria the Right represented. “Do they [the Social Catholics] really deceive themselves thinking they are Spain?”, *El Socialista* ironically wondered.<sup>214</sup> Far from consolidating a uniform national identity the dictatorship led to the fragmentation of it, with different competing Spanish identities fighting to become hegemonic among the masses.

Yet the *primorriverista* nationalist rituals and top-down mobilisation were to have a long lasting impact. Like the fascists, the *primorriveristas* built a symbolic universe taking the liturgy and the language from the Christian tradition in order to endow the nation with a sacred aura. This facilitated the ‘interiorization’ of the nation as a sacred value by thousands of Spanish Catholics perfectly familiarised with Christian liturgy and symbolism. What is interesting when looking at the rites developed during the dictatorship is the extraordinarily high number of them. The thousands of patriotic ceremonies celebrated all around Spain were unprecedented and reached the most remote corners of the country, hence reinforcing the dominance of the Catholic-Monarchic symbolic universe in the public political sphere. This in turn constituted a poisoned legacy for the Second Republic, for the democratic forces found it extremely difficult to transform the National Catholic symbolic universe constructed in the 1920s. As a result, the Second Republic was to suffer a

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<sup>210</sup> *El Sol*, 2-2-1930.

<sup>211</sup> *El Sol*, 5-2-1930.

<sup>212</sup> This proposal was supported by Ossorio y Gallardo and Luis de Zulueta in the following days. *El Sol*, 6-2-1930 and 7-2-1930.

<sup>213</sup> *El Socialista*, 3-1-1930; 31-1-1930.

‘representation crisis’ for the political authority of the democratic parties was not integrated into a wider social order that could create a sense of national community.<sup>215</sup> On the other hand, the experience the Social Catholics had gained during Primo’s regime in terms of mass mobilisation, party organisation and nationalist rituals was vital during the 1930s, when most of the former cadres of the UP entered *Acción Popular*, first, and, later, CEDA.<sup>216</sup> The Catholic Right not only incorporated much of the *primorriverista* discourse (counter-revolution, the cult of the leader, and organic and hierarchical concept of nation, the myth of the Anti-Spain) but also the sacred symbolic universe developed during the dictatorship.<sup>217</sup> Furthermore, some *primorriverista* rituals (such as the *misas de campaña* consecrating the national flag), and myths (*Hispanidad*) became essential tools to mobilise support for the rebels during the Civil War.<sup>218</sup> And it was the same *primorriverista* top-down approach to mobilisation that Franco was often eager to use to orchestrate grand gatherings against “bad Spaniards” and critical foreigners all the way through his 40-year long dictatorship. The Manichaeic discourse of both dictatorships had their equivalent Manichaeic rituals.

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<sup>214</sup> “La España de ‘El Debate’ no es la verdadera España”, *El Socialista*, 1-2-1930.

<sup>215</sup> Radcliff, “La representación de la nación”, 311-312. The failure of Republicans and Socialists to create an overarching, mobilising state nationalism during the Second Republic in Helen Graham, “Community, Nation and State in Republican Spain, 1931-1938”, in C. Mar Molinero and A. Smith (eds.), *Nationalism*, 133-147.

<sup>216</sup> For former *upetistas* and *somatenistas* in the CEDA see Castillo, *Propietarios*, 349-359. For the rituals and organisation of the CEDA, with its youth and female sections, see, for example, *CEDA*, 15-1-1935, n. 38, 6; 15-2-1935, n. 40.

<sup>217</sup> See, for instance, *CEDA*, 15-2-1935, n. 40, 12-13; 1-9-1935, n. 51, 10-11; *Revista de Estudios Hispánicos*, n. 7, July 1935, 78-83; n. 9, September 1935, 246-247.

<sup>218</sup> For the use of *misas de campaña* see Giuliana di Febo, *Ritos de guerra y de victoria en la España franquista* [Bilbao: 2002], 46-47. For the use of the myth of *Hispanidad* see Eduardo González Calleja and Fredes Limón Nevado, *La Hispanidad como instrumento de combate* [Madrid: 1988].

## CONCLUSION. FROM NEGATIVE INTEGRATION TO NEGATIVE NATIONALISATION

In the aftermath of World War I, some European elites resorted to dictatorships as a way to halt the advance of the Left. In these cases nationalism and counter-revolution were two sides of the same coin. Repression of political opponents went hand in hand with vast programmes of mass indoctrination in nationalist values designed to gain the hearts of the population, diminish the appeal of the Left among the lower classes and legitimise the dictatorships simultaneously. The principal argument of this thesis has been that the dictatorship of Primo de Rivera has to be understood within this counter-revolutionary European context as an authoritarian nationalist regime which attempted a vast process of nationalisation of the masses in National Catholic values. As many other European dictatorships of the inter-war period, Primo realised that the liberal oligarchic system would not hold in the post-1918 world and envisaged the need to create a new authoritarian state that could integrate the masses without paying the toll of a real democracy. In Spain, and elsewhere, this required the creation of a new political discourse that would redefine the traditionally dominant liberal canon of the nation and rally the people around the dictatorship via 'negative integration', i. e. the indoctrination of lower and middle classes in nationalist ideas emphasising foreign and domestic foes.

Seeking to reach a wide audience, the *primorriverista* discourse during the Military Directory was intentionally vague and populist. It blended elements from regenerationists, Maurists, Social Catholics, Traditionalists and above all military nationalism in a 'negative discourse' that attempted to integrate different political groups from the opposition to common enemies (such as *caciques*, peripheral nationalists, syndicalists, Moroccans, etc). In the first two years of the regime, the *primorriverista* discursive strategies sought to justify the existence of the dictatorship on a temporary basis. During the Civil Directory, once the dictator announced his intention to build a new state, the *primorriverista* discursive strategies shifted to ensure the disparagement of the Restoration and the transformation of the Canovista structures. National Catholicism was created from above in an attempt to endow the regime with a solid doctrinal basis and increase social support for the dictatorship. It merged French



integral nationalism, Italian fascism and vitalist philosophy with diverse postulates of the Spanish anti-liberal right to formulate a new discourse which heralded the end of democracy, defended a sacred concept of the fatherland and promised a national re-birth via authoritarian corporative state. The result was a new highly *fascisticised* nationalist ideology in line with the European radical right.

Aiming to create a 'political religion' based on the cult of the nation as the supreme value that could have an impact on the entire Spanish society, the *primorriveristas* promoted a series of political myths (the messianic leader of the fatherland, the Anti-Spain and so on), displayed a religious rhetoric, fostered national symbols in the public sphere and invented a series of nationalist rituals. The goal was nothing less than the moral and physical improvement of the 'Spanish race', the making of a 'new Spaniard', and to this end state agencies were mobilised to an unprecedented extent. Yet the results of this process of state nationalisation were patchy. Although the dictatorship managed to mobilise sectors of Spanish society hitherto uninvolved in politics, create a catch-all interclass party and organise tens of nationalist rituals in the most remote corners of the country, its effectiveness was poor. The regime failed to turn the National Catholic concept of Spain into the hegemonic one, let alone to create any sort of consensus among Spaniards about the nation and the regime. On the contrary, the more the regime radicalised its discourse the more social support it lost.

Reasons for this failure lie in the functioning of the state agencies as much as the policies implemented by the *primorriveristas*. First of all, it is possible to detect a pattern in the work of state institutions under Primo: both the educational system and the army lacked the necessary funds to carry out the ambitious plans of mass nationalisation. Here the *primorriveristas* were caught in a sort of 'demographic trap'. The economic development of the first two decades of the twentieth century had led not only to the rise of a working class which challenged the Restoration system but also to an important demographic growth. The *primorriverista* programmes of mass nationalisation were precisely an attempt to neutralise the threat of a changing society by integrating the lower classes into the national ideal. Consequently, Primo reformed the state agencies seeking to turn them into modern efficient indoctrinating institutions. Yet the modernisation of the state agencies could not keep pace with the demographic growth which put extra pressure on these already obsolete institutions, thus hampering their functioning as effective indoctrinating machines.

A second factor which seriously undermined the efficiency of the state agencies as institutions of nationalisation was the alienation of public sector officials and workers. *Primorriverista* policies of purging, surveillance and repression of teachers and public servants by the military antagonised the very personnel the dictatorship needed for an effective transmission of the official message. To make things worst for the regime, Primo did not merge the UP with the state bureaucracy but rather used military officers to control the state apparatus. Unlike Mussolini, Primo did not create a bureaucracy linked to the official party and thus precluded the emergence of a new political clientele dependent on the regime. Hence, the *primorriveristas* could not be assured of the political loyalty of the UP social bases nor the 'passive popularity' that Mussolini achieved in Italy. By the time Maeztu realised the need for granting *upetistas* a privileged position in the state apparatus in December 1929, the *primorriverista* edifice was crumbling and most of the *upetistas* had already abandoned it.

Thirdly, the implementation of *primorriverista* policies of nationalisation severely undermined the initial support of many on the Right. Indiscriminate repression in Catalonia towards all those labelled 'separatists' led to the detachment of the regionalist sector of the Catalan bourgeoisie and the Traditionalists from the regime, while the linguistic policies of 'Spanishization' brought direct confrontation between Catalan Church and teachers, on the one hand, and the *primorriveristas* on the other. As in many other cases, language teaching policies proved to be counterproductive rather than an unifying factor in the process of state nationalisation. As Calvo Sotelo observed as early as 1924, the regime's policies of nationalisation in Catalonia made things worse, turning many sectors of the population, hitherto opposed to of all sort of Catalanism, into Catalanist sympathisers.<sup>1</sup>

In the case of the Social Catholics it was not so much the *primorriverista* anti-regionalist policies as the incorporation of the UGT into the *comités paritarios* and the increasing power of the state in educational issues that led to the gradual breach with the government from 1928 onwards. This proved costly for the *primorriveristas*, as the Social Catholics constituted the main social bases of the UP and the Somatén, but it was in many ways a logical product of the *primorriverista* ideological understanding of the leading role the state should have in process of nationalisation. While the incorporation of the socialists into the corporatist state was essentially a *primorriverista* move to co-

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<sup>1</sup> Calvo, *Mis servicios*, 68-69.

opt the moderate sector of the working class, Primo always considered the Church as subordinate to the state. He was determined to extend state control over education to secure an effective process of nationalisation which necessarily collided with ecclesiastical interests. The dictator had to trade off some concessions (as granting the right to issue decrees to religious colleges), yet he held firm in more important issues in terms of mass nationalisation such as the *texto único* and the creation of new public state-controlled secondary schools.

Governmental policies of nationalisation also proved counterproductive in the rural areas. The public image of the *delegados* soon deteriorated owing to indiscriminate repression, accusation of corruption, the officers' inability to deal with municipal issues and the financial strains put on local councils. When the regime created a permanent institution specifically devoted to mass indoctrination in the rural areas in 1929 the SNEFCP faced the same old problems of under-funding and had no time to make an impact. The overall effect of the actions of the 'apostles of the fatherland' was to undermine the regime, the military as a whole and the National Catholic idea of Spain, since *primorriverista* officers constantly presented nation, dictatorship and army as the very same thing. A similar negative effect on the urban and rural population is to be observed in the cases of the *Somatén* and the UP. The abuses of the militia and the transformation of the party into a repressive police institution created hostility towards the regime and discredited the *primorriverista* idea of Spain. If the *primorriverista* discourse sought a 'negative integration' of the entire population against the 'enemies of the fatherland', the actions of the agencies propagating that message led to a 'negative nationalisation'.

The different political proposals that emerged after the fall of the dictatorship are telling of the discredit into which the *primorriverista* idea of Spain had fallen and, ultimately, of the regime's failure to nationalise the masses in National Catholic values. In Catalonia, different nationalist and regionalist factions came together in their struggle against the dictatorship, and cultural production in the Catalan language increased, while democratic republican Catalan tendencies gained mass support. In the Basque Country, the two factions of the Basque Nationalist Party re-united and the nationalist movement soon increased its popular support. In other areas of Spain regionalist movements mushroomed in the early 1930s. Some of these movements were the continuation of the late 1910s and early 1920s conservative regionalism, but some others had acquired a more democratic veneer. More importantly, as a reaction against

the dictatorship, the idea of a republican democratic Spain took root among many in the urban centres. As soon as the *primorriverista* regime collapsed, a democratic Spanish nationalism re-emerged stronger than ever. From February 1930, liberals and socialists argued in favour of the formation of a new constitutional system based on universal suffrage and an active participation of the “Spanish people”, as the only way to heal the divisions originated by Primo’s dictatorship. In December 1930, Spanish liberals, republicans, and socialists reached a political agreement with peripheral nationalists to establish a secular, democratic and decentralised republic.

The *primorriverista* ideological legacy to the Right was rich and complex. Throughout the Second Republic, the Social Catholics of *Acción Popular* adopted the *primorriverista* sacred anti-democratic concept of Spain, together with its symbolic elements and liturgy, as a central part of the conservative discourse. Nevertheless, the fact that the Social Catholics and the Catalan monarchists returned to their pre-1923 regionalist postulates as soon as Primo fell illustrates how unpopular the *primorriverista* centralist policies had become. Only marginal parties in the extreme right, *Renovación Española* and *Falange Española y de las J.O.N.S.*, stridently opposed all forms of regionalism and defended the centralist policies of the dictatorship. Yet electoral oblivion did not mean political insignificance. The generals who revolted against the Second Republic in July 1936 were highly influenced by the National Catholic postulates elaborated during Primo’s dictatorship. In fact, the military rebels declared they sought to achieve what Primo could not: “to nationalise and to de-intoxicate the masses, to create a new state and to reorganise society”.<sup>2</sup>

This second attempt of mass nationalisation was to be much more radical and brutal. The Francoist regime differed from the *primorriverista* in two main aspects. First, as in 1923, the 1936 military coup was welcomed by most of conservative groups, but this time the democratic experience of the early 1930s had frightened many on the Right who had become much more extreme in their determination to halt social change and political reform. All this took place within the context of an ‘European Civil War’ in which the struggle between Right and Left had been exacerbated during the 1930s by the Great Depression and the advance of fascism. Second, Francoism emerged from a civil war, unlike the bloodless coup that brought Primo to power. Franco’s refusal to recognise the defeated after the war and his determination to established a reign of terror

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<sup>2</sup> The words of Jorge Vigón in Juan Carlos Losada Malvárez, *Ideología del ejército franquista (1939-1959)* [Madrid: 1990], 132.

with large-scale executions and mass imprisonments made the political conditions of the 1940s very different from the *primorriverista* era. Yet, for all these differences, it is important to note that the ideological principles behind both Primo and Franco's bid to regenerate Spain and nationalise the masses bore a close resemblance. This was not only owing to the fact that the former ideologues of the *primorriverista* regime played a leading role in the merging of different conservative groups in the F.E.T. and were soon integrated into the Francoist government during the Civil War. It was also that many ideological postulates, myths, ceremonies and 'traditions' invented and/or consolidated during the dictatorship of Primo de Rivera became part of the Francoist regime from its conception. The organic concept of the nation as a supreme and sacred political value, the idea of Spain as conterminous with Catholicism, *Hispanismo*, the corporative state, the idealisation of the military leader as the saviour of the fatherland and the myth of the Anti-Spain were all essential elements in a Francoist discourse soaked in religious and medical vocabulary, whose ultimate goals were the nationalisation of the masses in authoritarian and militarist values and the creation of a 'New State'. In many respects, Francoist National Catholicism was ideologically born during the dictatorship of Primo de Rivera.

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